

The Co-op As An Employer



COCHF Workshop
Saturday April 9th, 2016
Facilitator ~ Kelly Jackson

Agenda

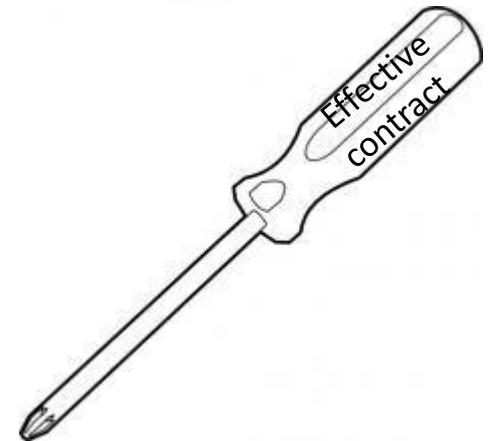
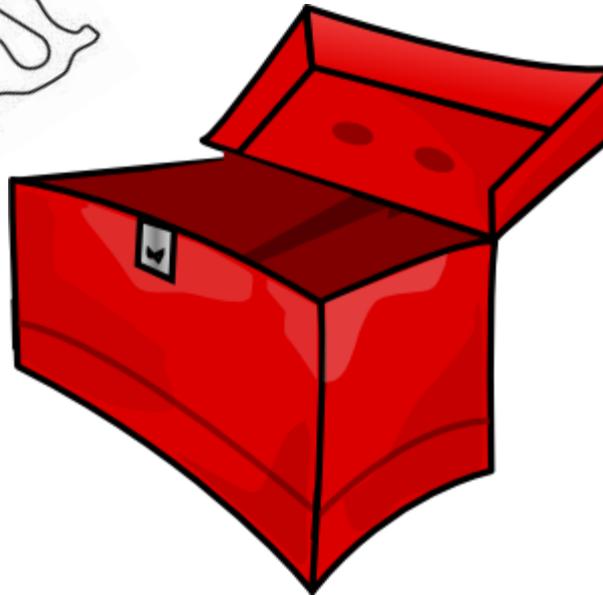
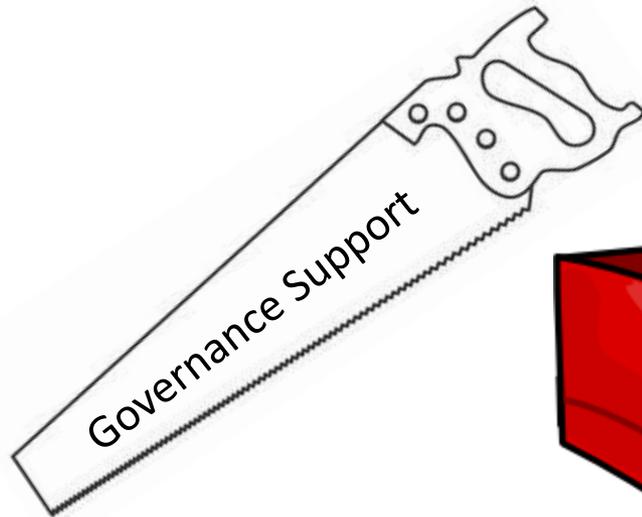
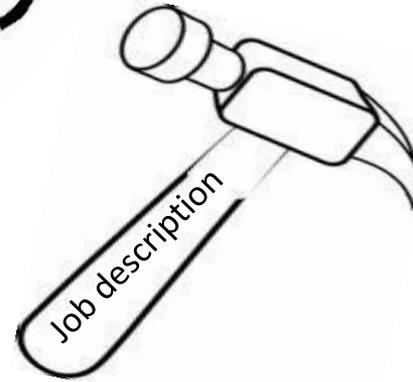
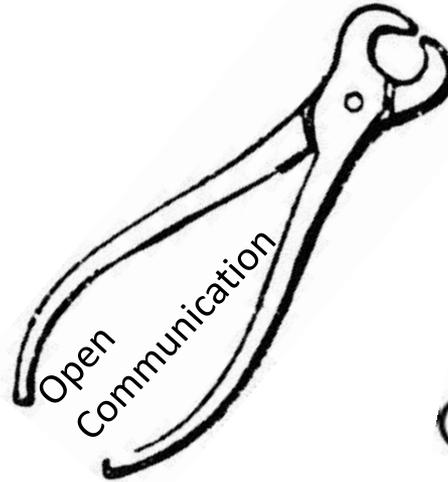
- Introductions
- The Board as an Employer
- Why Good Management Matters
- Management Models
- Contracts
- What Does Staff Do?
- Job Descriptions
- Governance and Management
- Evaluations
- Training
- Dealing with Conflict
- Group Work
- Wrap up and Evaluation

The Board as an Employer

- The Board is the employer.
- Staff report to the Board on a regular basis through written and oral presentations.
- Staff should attend all board and member meetings except for those that concern staff's annual evaluation, salary decisions, complaints, etc., unless requested by the board to be present.
- A staff evaluation should be conducted annually.
- A clear job description should be available to the board and reviewed annually.
- A staff liaison should be appointed.

- The Board should be knowledgeable about the Employment Standards Act, the contents of the employee's contract, Human Rights, Revenue Canada payroll deductions, Worker's Compensation (WSIB), Bill 168 Workplace Violence and Harassment and the conditions of the employee's health benefits, if offered.
- The board has a legal obligation to provide a safe working environment and to protect staff from harassment on the job.
- Staff has an obligation to the employer to follow the same rules and regulations and do the job that they are paid to do.

Tools for Success in Management



Why Good Management Matters

- Housing co-ops are business enterprises, providing affordable community-minded housing for its members, but still businesses nonetheless. And we all know that businesses require good management to survive.
- So now more than ever housing co-ops need excellent management – the right people with the right tools and training – to make certain their co-op businesses can continue to provide quality housing for its members well into the future.

Core Management Standards

The Core Management Standards set out the results that good management brings. They are divided into five key areas:

1. Managing the finances
2. Keeping the co-op in good repair
3. Keeping the co-op full
4. Meeting your co-op's legal requirements, and
5. Supporting good co-op governance

Two Management Models

Whatever management model your board chooses, remember

- Governance and Management depend on each other
- Management of the co-op doesn't mean control of the co-op
- Good Management is not guaranteed. The relationship between staff and the board must be nurtured.

An Independent Employee

The Role of the Board as the employer includes:

- Supervising the manager
- Evaluating the manager
- Meeting employment standards
- Remitting Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance Premiums
- Providing a good, safe working environment for the manager and any other employees.



A Management Company

When the co-op decides to contract with a management company the board must:

- Decide what services the company will provide
- Use a competitive tendering process to choose the company
- Negotiate a contract with the company
- Oversee the contract once its in place



Employee Contract

The Co-op and employee must follow all laws relating to employment – nothing in the contract can override or go against any law. The Co-op should have a copy of the Employment Standards Act in the office.

The contract should be clear and detailed enough to avoid disputes over interpretation. However, it should not be so long that no one reads it.

The Co-op will find the contract more useful if it is written in plain language.

What should an employee contract cover?



The contract should cover the following areas:

- Salary and benefits
- Hours of work and overtime
- Leave Time (sick, personal, parental, compassionate, jury duty)
- Setting and changing job description
- Supervision of employee
- Discipline and performance evaluations
- Disputes and grievances
- Job security and termination
- Holidays and vacation
- Expenses
- Staff training and education
- Confidentiality
- Discrimination and harassment



What Does Staff Do in a Typical Day?



YOU'RE ALWAYS SO BUSY, CARTER. YOU COME TO WORK EARLY, YOU LEAVE LATE. WHAT ARE YOU UP TO ? "



- “What does staff do in the office all day?”
- “It can’t be that hard”
- “I was just there, and they didn’t look busy”
- Why are they here late?
- “They always seem to be on the phone”



- Do you know what staff deals with in a typical day?

Staff are often dealing with many different things and there are issues that come up that can throw the typical day to day stuff into a chaos.....



To wear many Hats:

Someone who has to do many different types of tasks or play a variety of roles.

- A co-op staff person wears many different hats..... Administrator, counsellor, mediator, handyman, IT, problem solver, information desk, bookkeeper.....



"I'd be OK wearing all these hats if just one of them was a crown."

Job Description

- A clear job description will avoid many disputes about whether the staff person should or not have done something.
 - Make sure your job description includes the following:
 - Title of job
 - Who the person reports to
 - General categories of responsibilities
 - they should be organized by work areas.
- *Remember the needs of the Co-op will change over time. The contract should include a clear process for changing the job description.

Job Description

Housing Co-op Manager

Sample Job Description

POSITION: Housing Co-op Manager

REPORTS TO: Board of Directors

WORK WEEK: 35 hours. Some evening work is required.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The manager's job is to oversee and be accountable for the management of the co-op's operations, subject to the general direction of the board of directors. The manager acts as agent of the co-op in delegated areas of authority and is responsible for hiring and supervising other co-op staff. The manager provides support to the board and members and keeps the co-op in touch with the wider co-op housing sector.

Responsibilities – Managing the Finances

The manager has overall responsibility for the financial management of the co-op.

The manager either carries out financial management tasks directly or supervises the work of the bookkeeper. Specifically, the manager, either directly or supervising the bookkeeper,

- ensures compliance with all financial requirements of the co-op's funding program
- administers the rent-geared-to-income program based on the requirements of the coop's funding program
- ensures that there is an adequate accounting system in place that produces monthly financial statements
- ensures that there are adequate financial controls in place & maintains the financial records
- prepares the co-op's capital and operating budgets, including proposed market housing charges, for submission to the board
- notifies the members of housing charge changes
- presents and explains financial statements to the board monthly and points out any matters of concern
- presents other financial reports to the board (such as member arrears, cash flow, capital forecasting and investment reports) as required

- supervises the work of the co-op's bookkeeper
- administers payroll
- makes sure that deposits are done on time and are properly recorded
- monitors cash flow
- manages member accounts receivable
- administers the co-op's accounts payable, including invoice processing and cheque preparation
- ensures that the co-op's reserves are appropriately invested
- administers a petty cash system
- administers the co-op's Arrears and Spending by-laws
- prepares working papers for the annual auditor's inspection
- advises the board and finance committee on financial matters
- drafts financial policies for the approval of the board or membership



Keeping the Co-op in Good Repair

The manager is responsible for developing an overall property maintenance and repair program. Specifically, the manager

- keeps property and maintenance records
- develops a routine and preventive maintenance plan
- makes sure a capital plan is developed and kept up to date
- administers a key control system
- administers the parking policy
- retains and supervises trades people and other contractors and consultants in accordance with co-op by-laws

- makes sure that each housing unit is inspected once a year and whenever a member moves out
- makes sure that the co-op has necessary life and safety systems, emergency response procedures and security measures in place
- makes sure that the co-op complies with the fire code, elevator code, Electrical Safety Authority rules and other legal requirements related to the co-op's property
- administers the member work request
- makes sure that the co-op is free of hazards
- advises the board on property matters
- provides a maintenance activity report to the board, as needed.



Responsibilities – Keeping the Co-op Full

The manager is responsible for developing a strategy to maintain full occupancy of the co-op.

Specifically the manager

- responds to enquiries and receives applications
- markets co-op units, as necessary, to fill vacancies
- liaises with marketing consultant, as needed
- makes sure units are quickly restored to market-ready condition following move-outs
- conducts credit and landlord checks
- administers the co-op's internal and external waiting lists

- administers the co-op's agreement with support services agencies
- co-ordinates move-outs, internal moves and move-ins to minimize vacancy loss
- makes sure new members sign occupancy agreements and make necessary payments before move-in
- makes sure new members are promptly welcomed and oriented
- advises on marketing and member selection issues
- provides monthly vacancy and marketing reports to the board.



Responsibilities – Meeting the Co-op’s Legal Requirements

The manager acts on the co-op’s behalf to ensure that it meets its legal requirements. Specifically, the manager

- liaises with the co-op’s lawyer
- maintains the co-op’s minute book and other corporate records
- files audited financial statements and required reports and notices with government agencies
- administers the co-op’s by-laws
- makes sure the co-op follows program rules, complies with the provincial co-op act and other laws, and protects the privacy of personal information

- assists the board with eviction hearings and works with the co-op's lawyer to obtain writs of possession, as necessary
- works with the co-op's lawyer on other legal proceedings related to the co-op's operations
- liaises with federal, provincial and municipal housing agencies and with other municipal agencies such as police, fire department and utility companies
- makes sure the co-op has adequate insurance coverage and administers claims
- reports to the board, as necessary, on legal issues as they arise



Supporting Good Governance in the Co-op

The manager is responsible for supporting good governance in the co-op by the board and membership. Specifically the manager

- provides the board with the information and advice it needs, in a clear format, to make sound decisions
- ensures that board meetings are well planned and prepared for and minutes are kept
- arranges for a board orientation each year and provides information about other training opportunities
- arranges for an annual board planning session

- promotes and supports effective two-way communication between the board and members
- ensures that members' meetings are well organized and minutes are kept
- works with the board to provide members with the information they need, in a clear format, to stay informed about the co-op and make good membership decisions
- advises directors and members about their role in the co-op's governance structure.



Office and Staff Management

The manager is responsible for the efficient administration of the co-op's office and its systems and for management of other staff of the co-op. Specifically, in addition to the administrative responsibilities set out above, the manager

- ensures that effective office systems and administrative procedures are in place and followed
- using outside assistance, as necessary, purchases suitable computer hardware and software and arranges for necessary support
- ensures office is adequately furnished, equipped and supplied
- receives and logs correspondence, forwards it as appropriate to the board or others, and responds or assists with board response

- hires, orients, supervises and evaluates other staff
- provides support to other staff and arranges for additional training, as necessary
- administers employee benefits program
- maintains personnel records
- maintains required Workers' Safety and Insurance Board records and prepares claims, if necessary
- reports to the board quarterly on personnel matters.



Supporting Good Management

The board can support good management by:

- Choosing the right management model
- Taking a professional approach * you want a professional standard of management, offer a professional employment environment
- Working as a team with open communication
- Setting realistic expectations
- Maintaining consistency and continuity
- Dealing with conflict promptly
- Offering proper training and coaching

The Board and Management Team

Board's Role (governance)	Staff's Role (management)
Responsible to the members	Responsible to the board
Concerned with decisions about ideas	Concerned with how to carry out the board's decisions
Sets goals	Proposes goals and helps the board achieve its goals
Governs within the by-laws (rules) or policies and recommends changes to the members	Manages within the by-laws (rules) or policies and advises the board on changes
Approves management procedures	Proposes management procedures and manages within the procedures approved by the board
Makes long term plans, committing facilities, money and people	Responsible for the day-to-day management, organization and control of budget resources
Supervises and directs work of senior employee or management company	Supervises and directs work of other staff
Reviews the co-op's progress towards its goals	Reviews the results of putting decisions into practice
Provides direction, advice, and support to help the staff fulfill their responsibilities	Keeps the board informed by making regular reports and providing advice and support

Ten Tips for Getting the Governance/Management Balance Right

1. Recognize that co-op management is an expert field.
2. Work to choose sound management and the right management model for your co-op.
3. Create a clear job description and contract.
4. Provide a good orientation to your co-op.
5. Provide a professional work environment.



Ten Tips (continued)

6. Set clear policies and procedures
7. Set clear priorities and realistic goals for board and management. (Annual board planning session)
8. Review your management goals and evaluate your results once a year. (Annual performance evaluation)
9. Strive for board and management improvement each year.
10. Management and governance shouldn't be in competition, so don't battle with staff or the management company.

Performance Evaluations

Evaluations are helpful to both the employee and the Co-op.
From the employee's point of view, the evaluation will:

- Receive credit for work completed
- Evaluate work in a fair and objective manner
- Establish realistic goals for the coming year
- Set performance expectations and career goals
- Promote communication and understanding



From the employer's or board's point of view, the evaluation will:

- Set job objectives and expected results for the coming year
- Recognize good work
- Discuss strong and weak areas, and set plans for how to improve weak areas
- Encourage staff to improve performance
- Recognize an employee's knowledge, abilities, skills and willingness to apply them

- Performance evaluations can be difficult or stressful for both staff and the Co-op. There is much less stress when the contract is clear about how the yearly evaluation will happen.
- The Co-op should give feedback to staff throughout the year, not just once a year through a very formal process. Staff need to know when they have handled a situation well or poorly.
- The evaluation can become a battleground if the Co-op saves up all its concerns for a year and tries to deal with them all at once.

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**"I always give 110% to my job.
40% on Monday, 30% on Tuesday, 20% on
Wednesday, 15% on Thursday, and 5% on Friday."**

Training and Education

Why invest in staff training?

- Lack of sufficient training can lead to accidents and costly mistakes
- Changes in technology, program rules and regulations means that staff must keep up with them in order to work effectively

Where can staff get training?

- CHF Canada workshops and online training
- Local Federations
- Staff Associations
- College / other recognized organizations (IHM)



Dealing With Conflict

If conflict develops between staff and the co-op,

- Encourage the parties to identify conflict as soon as it develops
- Encourage the parties to talk to each other directly about the problem
- Provide assistance/advise in problem solving techniques
- Seek outside help if conflict escalates
- Recommend training for the board, staff and members in communication and conflict management skills
- Having Staff Liaisons in place greatly assist with conflict resolution process

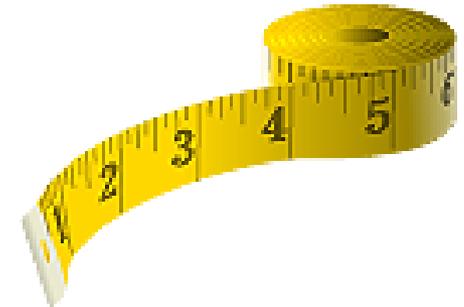


- A Staff Liaison Officer or Personnel Representative is a board appointed member who acts as the liaison with the manager.
 - Help ensure an effective working relationship among staff
 - Provide supervision and direction of the co-op's staff between meetings
 - Carry out their responsibilities in accordance with direction provided by the Board.

- A Staff Liaison is a representative of the staff.
 - They ensure the board is familiar with the work circumstances of the employee and any employee concerns.
 - Make recommendations to the board on employee matters
 - Help ensure an effective working relationship among co-op staff.

How Do You Measure Up?

- Are there regular reports to the board?
- Are you meeting the core management standards?
- Are there performance evaluations and are they largely positive?
- Are auditors reports and management letters “clean”?
- Are there problems indentified in funders compliance reviews (The Agency or municipal service manager)?
- Is staff up to date on program rules and regulations?
- Do staff stick around?



Resources

- Your local federation – workshops, website
- Your local staff association – workshops, networking
- CHF Canada – website (Resource Centre, Co-op Talk)
- Publications
 - Getting Management Right
 - Getting Governance Right
 - Getting our Co-op Principles Right
 - The Guide to Tendering for Co-op Management
 - Model Employment Contract



Group Work – Who's responsibility is it?

Breaking off into groups, determine which part of the management team is responsible for the following scenarios.

- Drafting the budget
- Preparing monthly financial statements
- Setting unit move out requirements
- Preparing Replacement Reserve Plan
- Drafting procedure for a new policy
- Setting up Committees
- Verifying incomes
- Enforcing Subsidy Policy

- Ordering new fridges
- Paying invoices
- Recruiting new Directors
- Collecting arrears
- Reviewing monthly financial statements
- Signing cheques
- Approving the budget
- Hiring management
- Observes conflict of interest guidelines
- Approves membership