

# How Trustees Can Support Continuous Quality Improvement

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**Academic  
Quality Improvement  
Program**

The Higher Learning Commission **NCA**

## **Supportive Boards Choose Leaders Who Create a Climate for Improvement**

- who believe that even good institutions can improve and become better ones
- who don't blame personnel for everything that goes wrong
- who make sure that the organization understands clear what its students and other stakeholders really need

# Supportive Boards Develop the Habits of Mind of AQIP Quality Enthusiasts

- Recognize that Stakeholders Define Quality
- Think in Systems and Processes
- Identify Root Causes
- Avoid Hasty Assignment of Personal Blame
- Understand Variation
- Think Dynamically
- Seek Robust and Preventively-Designed Processes
- Analyze Quantitatively
- Identify Operational or Conceptual Gaps
- Remain Humble about the Utility of Models
- Be Passionate about Improving Higher Education and Accreditation

# Supportive Boards Make Certain Every Employee Knows 10 Essential Things

1. Who are we?
2. What business are we in?
3. What businesses are we *not* in?
4. Where are we headed in the long term?
5. What are our priorities for the short term?
6. What values and principles should be characteristics of all our relationships and all of what we do?

7. What is my own personal job and how do my functions and operations fit into the larger purposes and systems of our organization?
8. What is the best way to do my job and what is expected of me? By whom? What is a “good job” and who defines it?
9. How will improvements to my job be accomplished? Who will do the improvements and by what methods? Will I be involved in these improvements? How?
10. What sources and forms of feedback are available to help me know how I’m doing?

# **Supportive Boards Ask Questions that Clarify an Organization's Purpose, Mission, Vision, and Values**

- What do you like about what you do here?
- What do you like about our industry or profession?
- What do you like about our organization when it's at its best?
- What legacy do you want to leave behind – your personal contribution to this organization?
- What legacy do you think we, collectively, should leave behind?

# Supportive Boards Publish Useful Purpose, Mission, Vision, and Values Statements

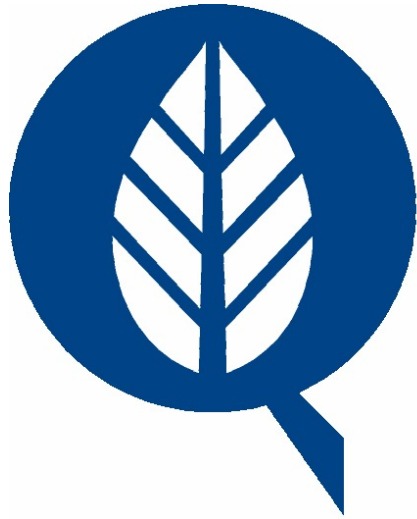
- That are from the heart;
- That are ennobling, appealing to our best instincts;
- That say something that applies uniquely to each person, and are not generic, usable-by-anyone statements;
- That give sufficiently clear direction that a year from now you can discuss, in specific terms, what progress you have made; and
- That have staying power, and will be an appropriate statement for years to come.

## **Supportive Boards plan for the reality that even the best leaders don't last forever**

Any organization and its employees require constancy of purpose, strategy, mission, goals.

Knowledge-based organizations can't afford to waste the knowledge and experience of their most valued employees.

Missing or poor succession plans risk letting an institution stall or backslide during transitions.



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