

Get "Governance" on the net

Governance sets direction for an organization (see "Looking for good governance," p. 26, this issue). The Canadian Institute of Governance (IOG) offers this working definition of governance: "The process by which stakeholders articulate their interests, their input is absorbed, decisions are taken and decision-makers are held accountable."

Corporate bodies are not the only ones looking to "good governance" to regain the confidence of their constituents. Many nonprofit organizations and associations are looking at their organizational structure to ensure that they are meeting their responsibilities.

A wealth of information and resources on governance exists on the net. Here is a glimpse of some of them:

The Canadian Institute of Governance (IOG)

<http://www.iog.ca/>

The IOG, an Ottawa-based think tank, which began in 1990, is a very useful starting point, whether you are involved with an organization that is seeking to change its structure or simply keeping yourself informed.

Start with "About Us" on the right, and you'll discover that you can sign up to receive their e-bulletin or check the news. Most of their publications are free and available for downloading. Click on "Learning Centres" to find information about workshops that are available on an ongoing basis. These workshops can be tailored to meet the learning needs of a particular group or organization.

The Centre on Governance, University of Ottawa

<http://www.governance.uottawa.ca/>

The Centre on Governance, based at the University of Ottawa, is an inter-

disciplinary research and teaching unit that offers programs of study at various levels including professional development courses. Click on "Events and Ongoing Projects," where you'll find information about what the Centre is working on, as well as a description of a two-year, part-time certificate program in public management and governance. Check also under "Publications" for a list of what is available. Papers may be downloaded free of charge.

The Governance Group

<http://www.governance.bc.ca/resource/htm>

Since governance is hardly as simple as definitions imply, the Governance Group from British Columbia provides resources on governance, board performance and managing. The site links to many Internet resources, such as the National Council for Nonprofit Boards and the Nonprofit Managers Library.

The Management Assistance Program (MAP)

<http://www.mapnp.org/library/topics.htm>

Established in 1979, MAP provides

management consulting and board recruitment services to non-profit groups. Its website presents a long list of free management tools—e.g. sample agendas for meetings, evaluation checklists for boards of directors, and many other tools that are worth checking into.

The Alliance Center

<http://www.allianceonline.org>

The Alliance Center is an organization that offers information on strategic planning, risk management, board development and financial management for nonprofit management and governance. Type in "governance" at the site search prompt and you'll find more than 130 articles and a useful index. From the headings you can select full text articles including, "What is the role of governance?" "What are some practical ways to strengthen governance?" and "Why don't boards govern all the time?"

Reference Department of the University of Toronto's Engineering and Computer Science Library
