

# The Marks of an Effective Board

As Outlined in *Called to Serve* by Max DePree

“There’s nothing wrong with efficiency,” according to Max DePree, “but the chief responsibility of boards is to be effective on behalf of the organization.” Effective boards take the long-range view and remember that ministers and staff are human, as are board members. In his book, *Called to Serve: Creating and Nurturing the Effective Volunteer Board*, DePree articulates eleven marks of an effective board. If I could recommend only one book to church boards, which would help to enhance the quality of governance while deepening the joys of leadership, that book would be *Called to Serve*. It can be found in the business section of better bookstores or can be ordered from any of the popular online booksellers. And you’ll need to read the book, of course, if you wish to *really* understand each of the eleven marks of board effectiveness.

— Stefan M. Jonasson

1. An effective board has a mission statement.
2. An effective board nurtures strong personal relationships.
3. An effective board stays in touch with its world (whatever its world is).
4. An effective board does very good planning.
5. An effective board gives itself competent and inspirational leadership.
6. An effective board works seriously at the growth, needs, and potential of its members.
7. An effective board provides to the institution wisdom, wealth, work, and witness.
8. An effective board is intimate with its responsibilities.
9. An effective board decides what it will measure and does it.
10. An effective board plans time for reflection.
11. An effective board says “thanks.”

Source: Max DePree, *Called to Serve: Creating and Nurturing the Effective Volunteer Board*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001. 102 pages. List price: \$10.00