Evaluating Board Maturity

Dear Board Member,

There's more to good boardsmanship than just learning the basics. For a board to operate at peak efficiency, board members need to hone their boardsmanship skills to a fine edge, examining and reexamining their policies and procedures.

There are clear indicators that the library board has its act together and functions at high efficiency--or it hasn't reached a level of maturity that will allow it to lead and guide the library within shouting distance of its mission.

The following are statements to test board maturity. Check *Yes, No or Gray Area* as the statement applies to your board. Then compare your answers to those of the rest of your board members.

	Yes	Gray Area	No
1) Our regular board meetings usually last less than two hours.	O	O	O
2) All board members feel free to vote against the majority.	O	O	O
3) We discuss issues, not personalities.	O	O	O
4) We use good methods of conflict resolution when conflict occurs among board team members.	O	O	O
5) At least two-thirds of our meeting time is used for policy review and planning.	O	O	O
6) We spend a good amount of time exploring long-range financial needs of the library and planning where to secure those finances.	O	O	O
7) We have occasional planned social activities for the board team.	O	O	O
8) We have job descriptions for board members, director, committee members and advisory committees.	O	O	O
9) Our board has all policies codified and assembled in a manual and each board member has a copy of the policy manual.	O	O	O
10) We have a policy for reviewing all board policies annually.	O	O	O
11) We have a plan for recommending board member candidates.	O	O	O
12) We have a plan for orienting new board members.	O	O	O

	Yes	*Gray Area*	*No*
13) Both board members and director orient new board members.	O	O	O
14) We have a policy and a plan for annually evaluating the director.	O	O	O
15) We have a policy and a plan for annually evaluating our own operations as a board team and as individual members of the team.	O	O	O
16) We have a board policy that explains board member conflict of interest and outlines how board members must handle conflict of interest.	O	O	O
17) Our board has a plan for maintaining good meeting attendance.	O	O	O
18) We have a policy and plan for ongoing board development.	O	O	O
19) The board budgets funds for board development expenses.	O	O	O
20) We have a plan for board members to act as advocates for the library--lobbying, public relations.	O	O	O
21) Our board members actually act as advocates for the library.	O	O	O
22) All board members understand their legal liabilities for the library.	O	O	O
23) Our board understands the difference between management and governance.	O	O	O
24) Our board is comfortable with delegating all management responsibility to the director.	O	O	O
25) Our board conveys, in clear terms, what we expect from the director.	O	O	O
26) Our board considers the director an integral part of the board team and its decision-making process, no matter what the issue before the board.	O	O	O
27) We have an annual meeting calendar outlining board duties that occur annually.	O	O	O
28) All board members know the history of the library.	O	O	O
29) We have a mission statement and annually review our mission statement.	O	O	O
30) We have a long-range plan and annually review the long-range plan.	O	O	O