

SHIFTING PARADIGMS

SHIFT IN BOARD ROLE

MANAGERIAL
safe practices
low risk endeavors
ensure continuity

TO

TRANSFORMATIONAL
articulating vision
emerging opportunities
engage change

— accompanied by —

SHIFT IN BOARD FOCUS

PAST & IMMEDIATE PRESENT

TO

THE FUTURE

reactive

proactive

(safely achieved by limitation policies that pre-approve plans & actions)

— turning board attention to those on whose behalf it serves —

SHIFT IN PRIMARY RELATIONSHIP

STAFF ↔

← BOARD →

↔ OWNERS

DIRECTORS

TO

TRUSTEES

SHIFT IN WORLD VIEW

SCARCITY

zero-sum **force**

• owned •
competitive
win/lose dynamics

CONTROL

fed by: **DISTRUST**
generating:
suspicion, fear, stagnation

↘ **POWER** ↗

← **TIME & DOLLARS**
may be zero-sum resources;

CREATIVITY and
CAPABILITY are not

ABUNDANCE

incremental **energy**

• shared •
collaborative
win/win dynamics

EMPOWER

fed by: **TRUST**
generating:
enthusiasm, growth, joy

THE **POWER** PARADIGM SHIFT

The beauty of the Policy Governance® model is that it is meant to empower people, and empower them safely. It unleashes leadership and skill and creativity to fulfill the vision people are seeking to serve. All of this is **power**, and the more we call forth, the more we have, together. The model would infuse and enthuse the organization to fulfill its reason for being and transform the world it serves.

The point of the model is not to parse out authority between Board and Executive, trying to balance the size and weight of the pieces.

(Note that when empowerment stops at executive level, the spirit of the Carver model is being violated and its value sabotaged.)

This power paradigm-shift is difficult to convey because everyday life is fraught with power struggles. We grow up experiencing power as a zero-sum commodity. We recognize power when it is exercised in opposition, one side competing against another. We miss fully recognizing that power *with*, power in partnership, is incrementally greater than power exercised *over* or *against*.

As primates, humans have opposable thumbs; it is the combination of opposable thumbs and large brains that enabled the towering dominance we human beings have achieved as a species. But when a thumb ‘opposes’ a finger, it is to grasp something — to take hold; to hold in hand. — A hand that the thumb and the fingers share and belong to. They are partners. This dynamic is what Policy Governance is designed to maximize in organizations.

MKeip / 2006

NOTE: Policy Governance © is the registered service mark of John Carver. The authoritative website for the Policy Governance model can be found at www.carvergovernance.com