Overview
A governing board cannot accomplish its work or properly fulfill its fiduciary obligations without an honest and supportive relationship with the CEO. Chief executives cannot be successful without an effective working relationship with their boards. Creating a culture of collaborative leadership between boards and CEOs is critical to the well-being of the organization and the effectiveness of its leadership. However, at times the board/CEO relationship may not get the care and attention it requires or deserves.

In Creating a Culture of Collaborative Leadership Between Boards and CEOs: A Practical Guide for Trustees, authors David A. Bjork and Dan Fairley offer practical guidance for boards and CEOs about how to establish, build, navigate, and maintain their relationship successfully. This “handbook” provides several concise overviews of fundamental elements of the board/CEO relationship, including:

- Understanding Board and CEO Responsibilities;
- Board Expectations/CEO Expectations;
- Board Process and Practice;
- CEO Motivation, Performance Management and Evaluation;
- CEO and Executive Compensation;
- Executive Recruitment, Retention and Separation;
- Executive Development and Succession Planning;
- Leadership Transition Planning; and
- The CEO’s Role in Nurturing the Relationship.

This publication is designed to be a resource for both new and seasoned board members and CEOs. It should be included in new board member orientation materials and used as a primer in board leader and officer education programs. It also can provide guidance for members of board committees, such as the executive, compensation or governance committees, which may be tasked with implementing some of the responsibilities and processes discussed here.

Understanding the nature and importance of the board/CEO relationship and how to work together effectively can help both parties get the most out of this critical leadership partnership and can also help pave the way for establishing a board culture of active, engaged governance. As Bjork and Fairley conclude, “…if the board accepts and acts on its responsibility to nurture this relationship, it will make the CEO’s job easier, the board’s job easier, and the organization more successful.”

For more information about this publication, contact the Center for Healthcare Governance at 1-888-540-6111.

Reprinted with permission from the Center for Healthcare Governance.