



BOARD LEADERSHIP

POLICY GOVERNANCE IN ACTION

John Carver
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

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Governing Excellence: Living in a New Paradigm From Theory to Reality

by Linda Stief

John Carver refers to Policy Governance as a new paradigm for governance and governing boards. He has called it "a paradigm tailored to the special circumstances of governance" that enables us "to apply solutions more coherently." That's a bold statement but one that can be easily understood. A paradigm is something serving as an example or model of how things should be done. Thus Policy Governance serves as a model of how governance should be conceived. Yet living or operating in a new paradigm requires shifting from the paradigm we are currently in to operating in a new paradigm. It's the shifting of a paradigm that's difficult to comprehend, let alone realize.

POLICY GOVERNANCE, as a concept, can be understood—and boards and consultants have taken on knowing and using the model, but fully realizing the world that Policy Governance makes available is elusive, even to those who know and appreciate the model's precepts and power. We can understand, explain, use, work with, create tips and

tools, design new ways of viewing, and even be inspired by what Policy Governance provides. Yet referring to a paradigm is distinct from living in, thinking, and operating from a paradigm.

John Carver speaks about the difficulty of paradigm shifts in his introduction to *John Carver on Board Leadership*.

It should be no surprise that paradigm shifts encounter greater difficulty than, as Thomas Kuhn put it, "development by accumulation." Although we usually think of science as advancing smoothly and with unshaken commitment to new knowledge, Kuhn argues a compelling case for the resistance to science's enlightenment beyond the paradigms of the day. As to the social and psychological aspects of Thomas's argument,

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

WHO WRITES FOR BOARD LEADERSHIP?

BOARD LEADERSHIP has been published every other month since its first issue, May-June 1992. This issue is number 12, marking the completion of an even dozen years. In the first thirty-nine issues, I wrote virtually every article. The masthead carried the line "A Bimonthly Workshop with John Carver." Alan Strader, a very creative editor at Jossey-Bass, had decided that workshop rather than newsletter would be a better description of our intent with the publication. After all, *Board Leadership* was not really to be about news but about helping people get a better handle on aspects of the Policy Governance model, the way a workshop might.

Jossey-Bass has furnished a series of helpful, good-humored, competent editors for *Board Leadership* through all these years—Marta Martick, Susan Williams, Paula Sacey, and currently Debra Howell.

You may have noticed that the masthead now says "Policy Governance in Action" and lists me as executive editor. Those are the

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"Shouldn't this information
be confidential between me
and my staff?"

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Lingsheng Yao



Board Leadership No 72 March April 2004:

Board Leadership No 72 March April 2004 Book Review: Unveiling the Power of Words

In a global driven by information and connectivity, the energy of words has be evident than ever. They have the capability to inspire, provoke, and ignite change. Such is the essence of the book **Board Leadership No 72 March April 2004**, a literary masterpiece that delves deep to the significance of words and their effect on our lives. Published by a renowned author, this captivating work takes readers on a transformative journey, unraveling the secrets and potential behind every word. In this review, we will explore the book is key themes, examine its writing style, and analyze its overall effect on readers.

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