ForefrOnt
Engaging for impact

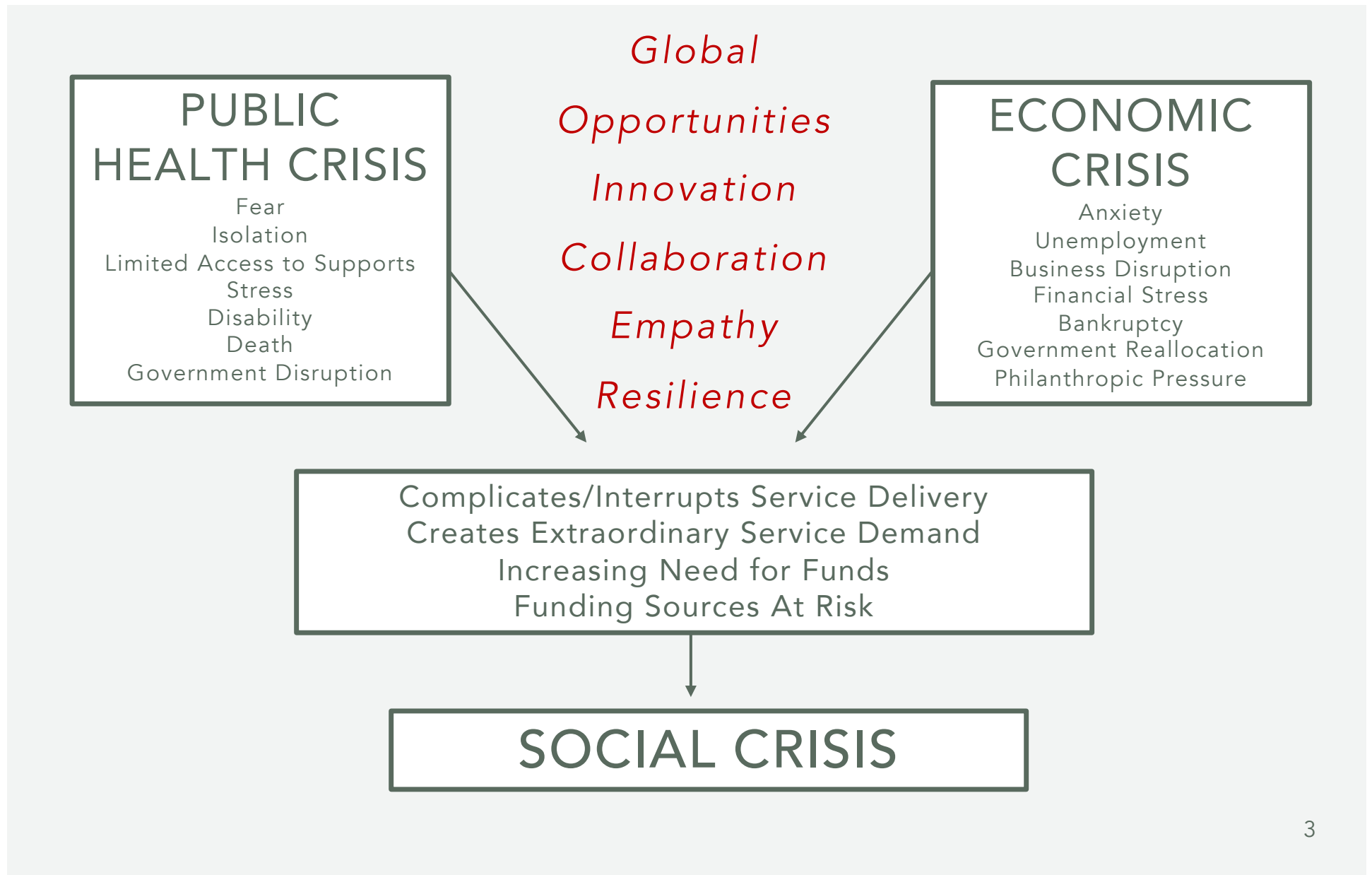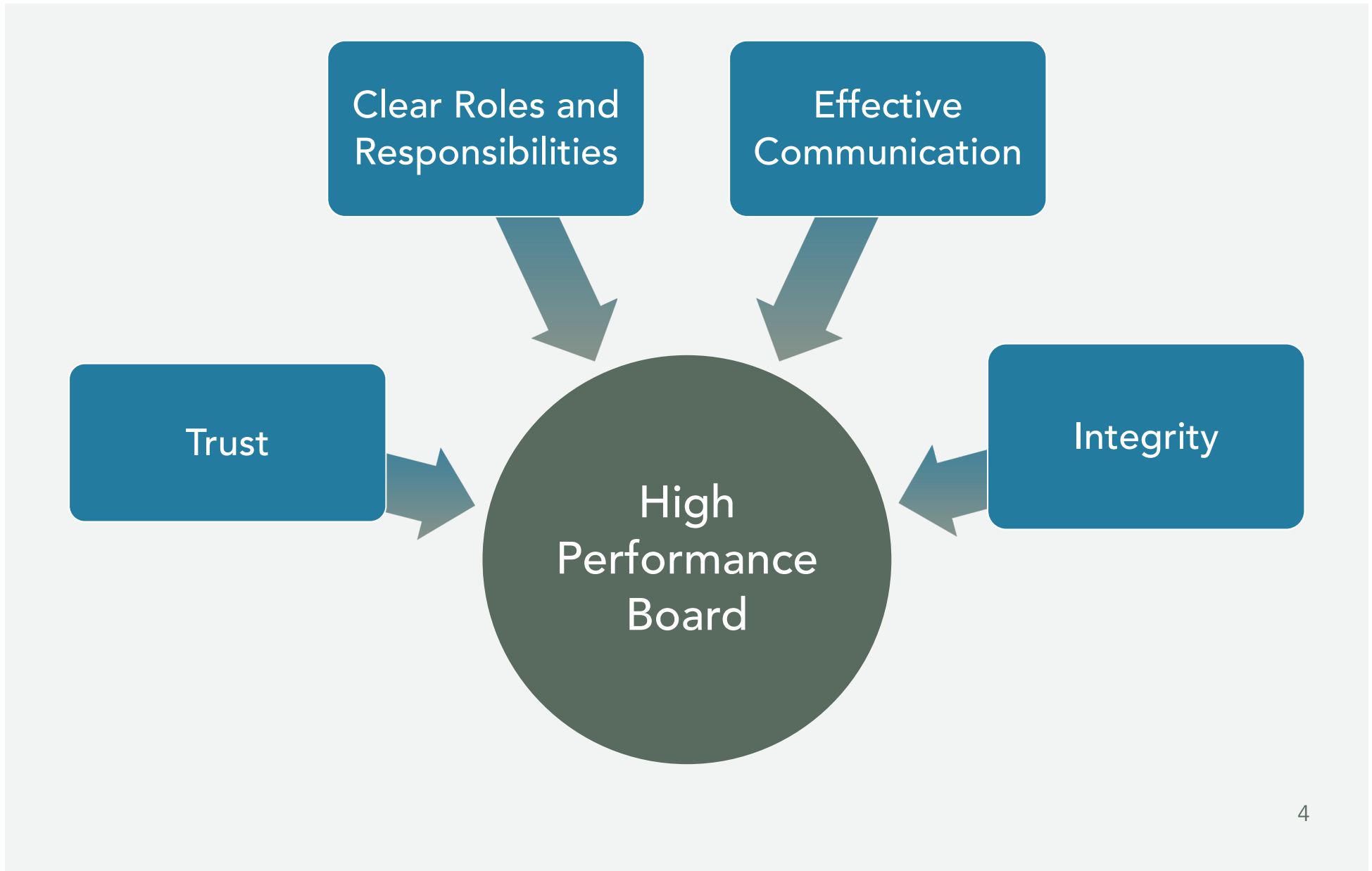# ACTIVATING YOUR BOARD IN A CRISIS

MAY 5, 2020

BoldAgenda | POWERING LEADERS
ENERGIZING BOARDS

COVID-19 CRISIS ➡ SOCIAL CRISIS

PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

Fear
Isolation
Limited Access to Supports
Stress
Disability
Death
Government Disruption

Global

Unprecedented

Ever-changing

Risks unknown

Stressors

Trauma

ECONOMIC CRISIS

Anxiety
Unemployment
Business Disruption
Financial Stress
Bankruptcy
Government Reallocation
Philanthropic Pressure

Complicates/Interrupts Service Delivery
Creates Extraordinary Service Demand
Increasing Need for Funds
Funding Sources At Risk

SOCIAL CRISIS

COVID-19 CRISIS ➡ SOCIAL CRISIS

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Global

Opportunities

Innovation

Collaboration

Empathy

Resilience

ECONOMIC CRISIS

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SOCIAL CRISIS

3

Essential Elements of a High-Performance Board

Clear Roles and Responsibilities

Effective Communication

Trust

Integrity

High Performance Board

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN A CRISIS

Shared Focus: Purpose and Viability

Staff/Management

The Board

Internal

Health & Safety

Immediate Needs & Obstacles

Day to Day operations

Resource Allocation

Oversight & Monitoring

Risk Management

External

Volunteers

Survivors/Clients

Partners

Donors

Fundraising

Strategy

Community

Planning

Advocacy

Relationship Building

Stewardship

Shared Approach: Tentative, Experimental and Iterative

BOARD ENGAGEMENT

Micro - Management

Effectively Engaged

Lack of Engagement

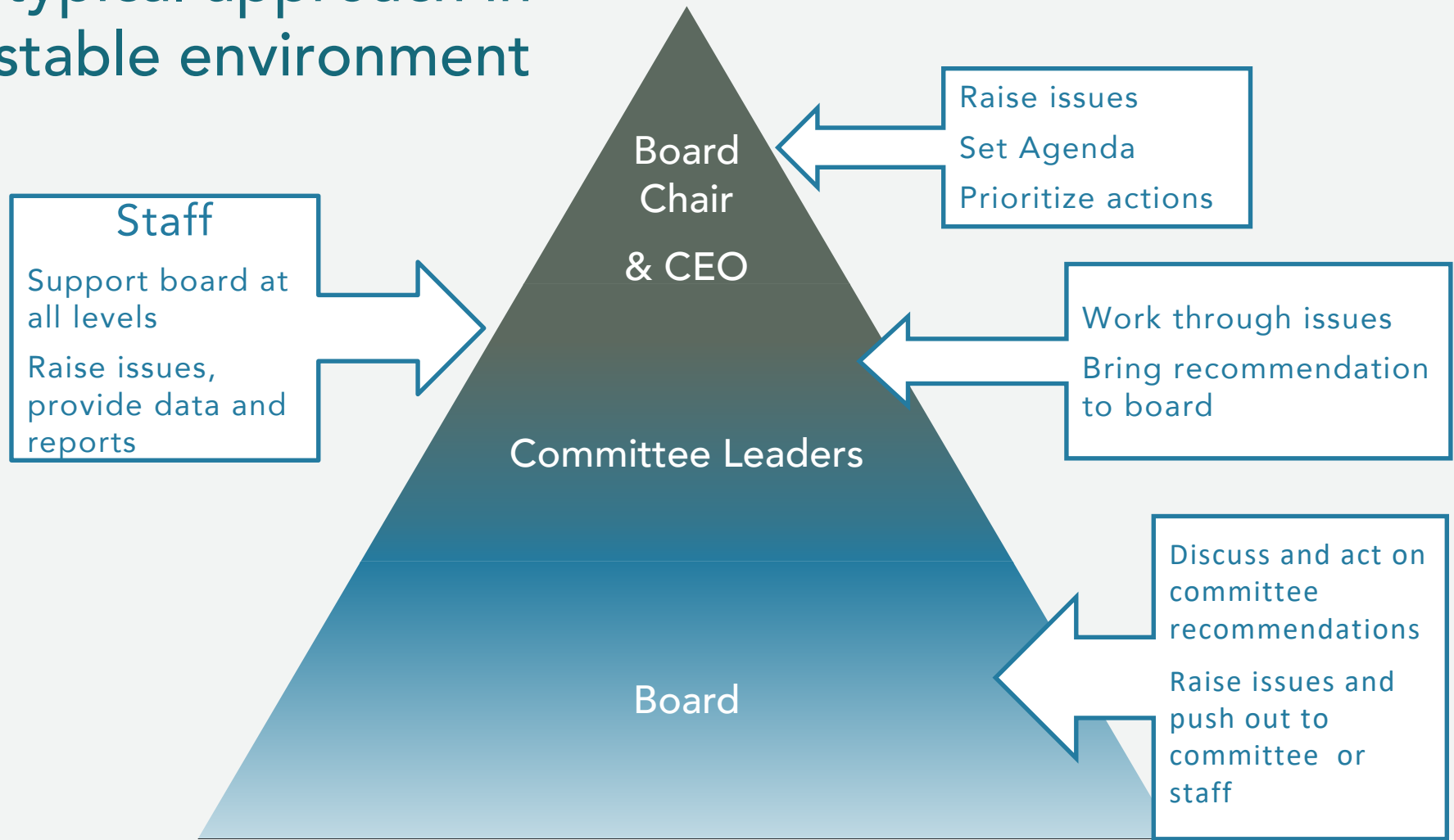| Micro - Management	Effectively Engaged	Lack of Engagement
Reasons Why	**Reasons Why**	**Reasons Why**
Unclear roles and responsibilities	Clarity on roles and responsibilities	Unclear roles and responsibilities
Lack of trust	Clarity on priorities and goals	Managing their own professional or personal crisis
Lack of clarity on priorities and goals	Accountability	Lack of clarity about expectations
Lack of generative thinking	Active and aligned committee structure	Lack of generative thinking
Misaligned committee structure	Strong strategic and generative discussions	Committees Inactive
Lack of staff		Lack of inclusiveness

Where is your board on this continuum?

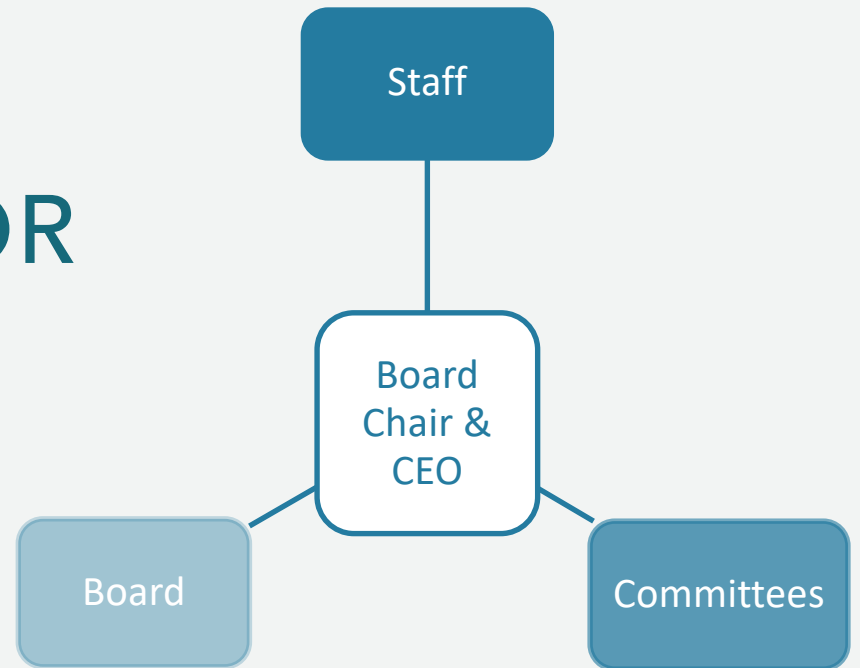# COVID-19 CRISIS – STRUCTURE

A typical approach in
a stable environment

Board
Chair
& CEO

Raise issues

Set Agenda

Prioritize actions

Staff

Support board at
all levels

Raise issues,
provide data and
reports

Committee Leaders

Work through issues

Bring recommendation
to board

Board

Discuss and act on
committee
recommendations

Raise issues and
push out to
committee or
staff

COVID-19 CRISIS – STRUCTURE

How does it really work?
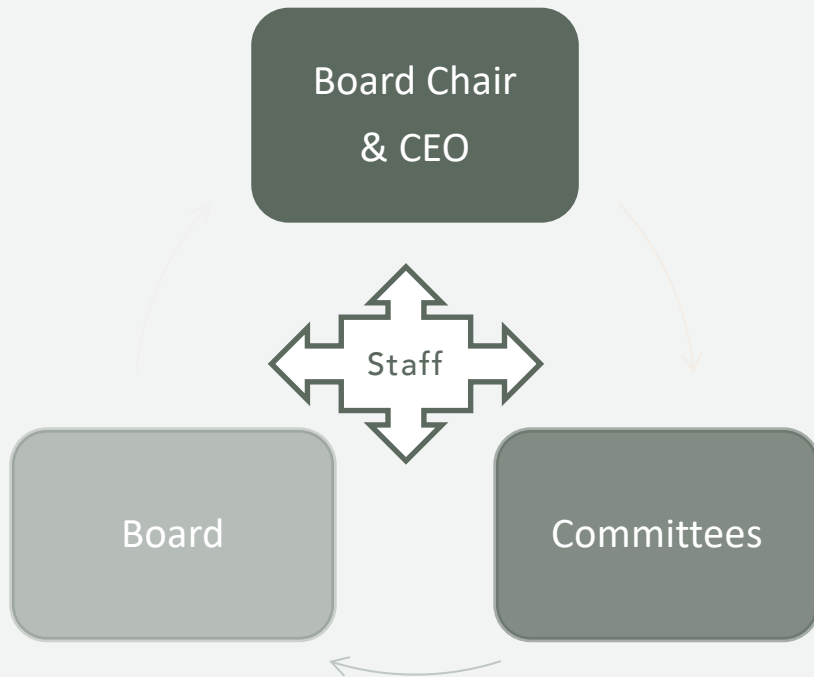
COVID-19 CRISIS – PROBLEM-SOLVING

RISK MANAGEMENT WITH UNKNOWNS

Agile Approach

1. Establish goals, priorities and values
2. Understand the situation
3. Develop options
4. Predict outcomes for each option
5. Choose the best course of action
6. Execute

Engage your board and staff in this process

COVID-19 CRISIS – TIME FRAME

THREE PHASES FOR BOARD ENGAGEMENT

1
Current
In The Crisis

2
Transition
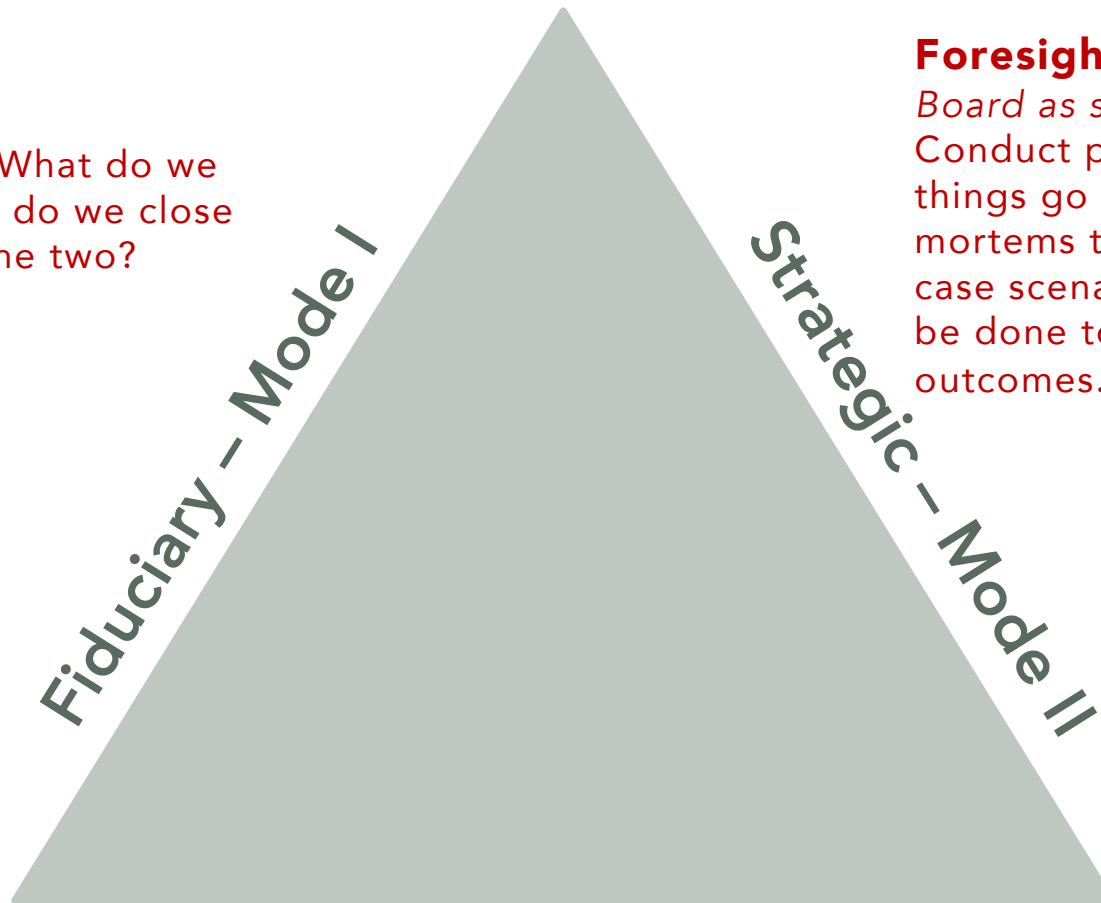To a Reimagined, Restructured Operating Environment

3
Post COVID-19
Recovery and Repositioning

Three Modes of Governance

Oversight

Board as fiduciaries
What do we know? What do we need to know? How do we close the gaps between the two?

Foresight

Board as strategists
Conduct postmortems when things go wrong and pre-mortems to develop best-case scenarios and what can be done to ensure better outcomes.

Fiduciary – Mode I

Strategic – Mode II

Generative – Mode III

Insight

Board as generative thinkers
Decide what to decide; how do we want to think about the issues we're facing?

Source: "Governance As Leadership: Reframing the Work of Non-Profit Boards", Richard P. Chait, William P. Ryan, and Barbara E. Taylor, 2004

CRISIS MODE: LEADERSHIP FOCUS

WHO LEADS? WHO FOLLOWS?

CEO/ED

To preserve the organization's mission and values while ensuring that they can continue to serve their community for the long-term.

BOARD

To support the CEO/ED effectively and efficiently while maintaining their governance role.

"Servant leadership is all about making the goals clear and then rolling your sleeves up and doing whatever it takes to help people win. In that situation, they don't work for you; you work for them." -Ken Blanchard

SUMMARY

Frame the crisis and your situation

Know your board's capacity to engage

Engage your board in all three modes

Build a constructive partnership

Stay safe and healthy – this is a marathon

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