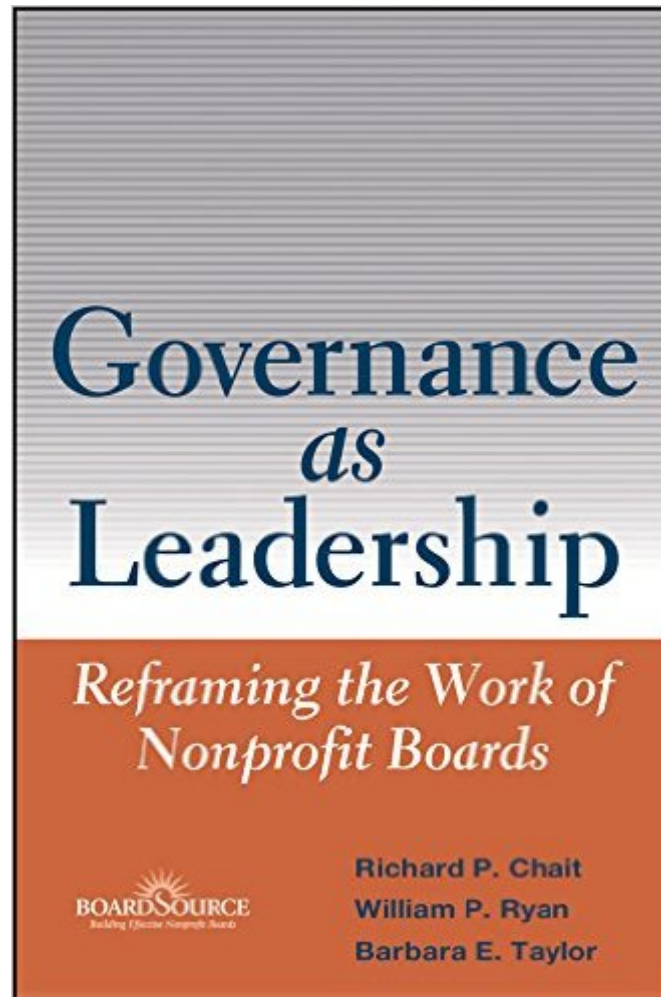


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# Governance As Leadership: Reframing The Work Of Nonprofit Boards



## Synopsis

A new framework for helping nonprofit organizations maximize the effectiveness of their boards. Written by noted consultants and researchers attuned to the needs of practitioners, *Governance as Leadership* redefines nonprofit governance. It provides a powerful framework for a new covenant between trustees and executives: more macrogovernance in exchange for less micromanagement. Informed by theories that have transformed the practice of organizational leadership, this book sheds new light on the traditional fiduciary and strategic work of the board and introduces a critical third dimension of effective trusteeship: generative governance. It serves boards as both a resource of fresh approaches to familiar territory and a lucid guide to important new territory, and provides a road map that leads nonprofit trustees and executives to governance as leadership. *Governance as Leadership* was developed in collaboration with BoardSource, the premier resource for practical information, tools and best practices, training, and leadership development for board members of nonprofit organizations. Through its highly acclaimed programs and services, BoardSource enables organizations to fulfill their missions by helping build effective nonprofit boards and offering credible support in solving tough problems. For the latest in nonprofit governance, visit [www.boardsource.org](http://www.boardsource.org), or call us at 1-800-883-6262.

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## Customer Reviews

There are four basic scenarios for nonprofit boards and three types of governance. Please keep reading--there will be a test at the end of our class."Governance by Fiat" is the first scenario, say the

three co-authors of *Governance as Leadership*. That's when trustees displace executives. Here the board does staff work. Sometimes the staff is incompetent so the board jumps in. Often the board enjoys staff work. Either way, it's dysfunctional. "Governance by Default" is the second scenario. Here both the trustees and the nonprofit executives disengage. No one has their eye on the governance ball--and the important work of governance is minimized. Left undone, it's a train wreck waiting to happen. "Leadership as Governance" sounds good, but it's cockeyed. Here the nonprofit staff displace the trustees. The CEO and/or senior team make decisions that should be in the governance arena. This happens frequently with founder-led organizations and "good old boy" boards. Often, the organization appears to be operating smoothly. Internally, this dysfunction never ends well. Sooner or later, someone will pay. The fourth scenario is the healthy one, what the authors call "Type III Governance." Here the trustees and executives collaborate. Each understands their appropriate roles, but unlike most boards, the staff affirms the board members when they upgrade to "generative thinking." So what's "generative thinking?" The authors use a variety of definitions to explain this cognitive process of excelling boards: sense-making, reflective practice, framing organizations, personal knowledge, etc. I liked "sensible foolishness" the best.

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