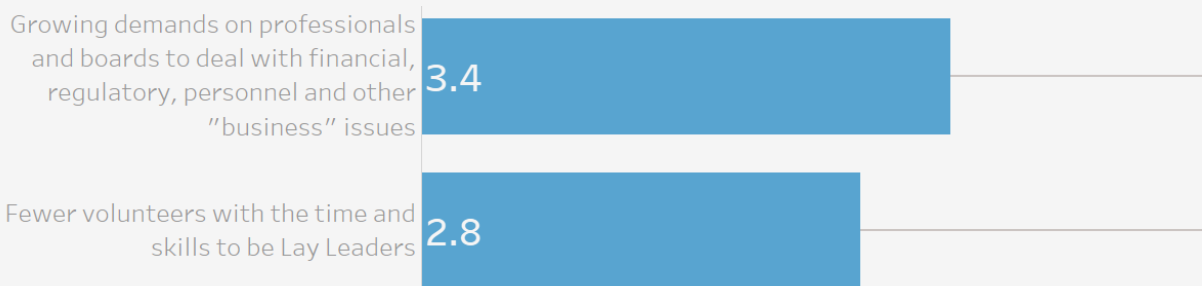




This document reflects 2023 Camp Insights Survey responses related to the following societal trends:



Note that respondents rated each societal trend using the following prompt - **Please rate the extent to which the societal trend below creates significant opportunities or challenges for your camp over the next 5 years** – using a 1 to 5 scale where **1 = Not Significant** and **5 = Very Significant**. *The full list of trends and their ratings can be found in the appendix of the full [2023 JCamp 180 Camp Insights Report](#).*

In addition, respondents were asked to share areas of both strength and growth in their efforts related to **Governance**, including volunteer recruitment and engagement. This document reports on camp approaches – we hope these ideas help other camps as they determine how to best respond to these societal trends.

Areas of strength and growth for camp governance

Governance is an area that camps have improved over the past couple of decades. However, some camps still struggle with operating a board or camp committee that completely fulfills all its responsibilities.

Areas of focus

Survey respondents' comments about camp governance efforts are grouped into the following categories:

- Board/Council Member Identification and Recruitment
- Orientation
- Volunteer Engagement
- Preservation and Adaptation: Board Structures and Processes

Board/Council Member Identification and Recruitment

“We consider every conversation with a community member or camp family as a potential onboarding discussion for future volunteers.”

Many camps reported efforts to recruit new board members¹. Camps are leveraging many sources to find new board members including alumni, volunteers, and parents. Some camps mentioned developing a culture of philanthropy to engage more parents, community members, and alumni as potential future board members. In some cases, recruitment happens through direct conversations with prospective candidates at alumni reunions and volunteer days, as well as board president and director outreach to prospective candidates.

Many camps reported establishing working groups and committees to take on specific projects/responsibilities and serve as a pipeline for future board membership. Finally, respondents stressed the importance of finding a good match of board needs and potential board member skills/interests.

Orientation

Camps also mentioned the importance of a well-designed process for onboarding new board members – sharing clear expectations, helping them access all relevant board policies and procedures, and working with them to help find a role where they can contribute immediately.

Volunteer Engagement

“[We] review roles and responsibilities with...board members [so they] understand why they are a member of the board.”

Respondents stressed the importance of creating a meaningful experience for board members, and also being very direct and transparent about their role. As new board members are recruited, many camps indicated their commitment to clearly communicate to volunteers their role and what they can expect as a member of the board.

“We have a renewed excitement and interest in engaging and recognizing volunteers.”

Camps are increasingly invested in stewarding volunteers – including board members – just like donors. Respondents mentioned finding new ways to recognize volunteers for their contributions including special events just for them. Some camps are providing perks to volunteers and board members, including discounts on camp tuition. Most importantly, camps are working to ensure board members are given meaningful opportunities to make a difference and receive intrinsic rewards for their efforts.

“[We] add non-board members to our committees to begin a pipeline [of] new Board members [who] are vetted for their commitment and ability.”

Camps reported both experience with and future plans for committees that engage volunteers in getting important work done for camp and also serve as a pipeline for future board membership. Respondents

¹ In this document, board members may refer to board, committee, or council members, depending on each camp’s organizational structure.

stressed the importance of giving these committees very clear, tangible responsibilities, holding them responsible for these tasks, and stewarding their efforts.

Commonly mentioned committees include those focused on specific campaigns/events like galas and fundraising campaigns, as well as those that network with and pull from specific audiences such as alumni and parents. Other committees are given specific responsibilities such as development or camper life.

“We continually work to engage our alumni and others we feel would be helpful to camp.”

As camps work to recruit new board members, they are especially focused on engaging alumni – particularly young alumni. Camps are revamping and refocusing their alumni outreach efforts (e.g., communications, events) to deliver what is important to alumni at different life stages. In addition to creating a pipeline of potential future board members, camp parents, and donors, a number of camps also see these activities helping to fulfill the camp mission to bring life-long connection to its communities.

Preservation and Adaptation: Board Structure and Processes

“We have put a big focus on Governance...[we’ve] reestablished our Governance Committee, put time and energy into building our committees, [and are receiving] advice from...non-profit legal experts on best practices.”

Many camps reported on initiatives to strengthen their governance structures and processes to ensure ongoing preservation, health and adaptation of their governance. Efforts include establishing or updating term limits; better defining board member roles and responsibilities; and better defining and implementing processes for removing inactive board members. Camps also mentioned implementing better processes for onboarding new board members, providing relevant training, and sharing board policies and procedures.