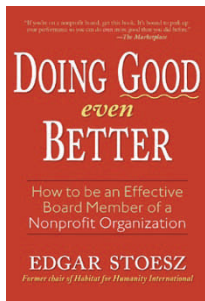


HIGHLIGHTED BOOK



Summary of *Doing Good Even Better* by Edgar Stoesz

Some years ago, I addressed a MEDA gathering, using the title *Organizations That Serve*. They were favorably impressed and suggested that I make it into a book. I did not get around to doing so until many years later when I was approaching retirement. I had, as I remember, five chapters and thought of it as a monograph.

When I asked my friend, Chet Raber, to write the foreword, he volunteered that he also had some material he would like to publish, and we decided to make it a joint venture. That is how a monograph became a book.

Good Books agreed to edit and publish what was, at best, a raw manuscript, but over what title? From a long list, we chose *Doing Good Better*. That seemed to summarize what we were trying to say. Organizations are about doing good. This book is about helping them to do it better.

The book was well-received. Before long, through my reading, continued service on boards and in doing board workshops, I accumulated a file of materials. Good Books felt that the information deserved to become another publication, *Common Sense for Board Members*.

A new book

Both books were well-received, but three years ago Merle Good suggested that a revision was needed. I was receptive to the idea, but it was some months before we could agree that both books should be retired and replaced by a new book that would incorporate the best of both books, plus what I had learned in the interim. So I went to work writing a new book, although retaining some of the previous material.

Again we were faced with the question of a suitable title. A long list was drawn up, but nothing seemed to grab us. The book was complete but still without a title when I was describing it to a friend. After listening intently she said, “Oh, I get it. We are going to do good *even better*.” Just like that, the book had gotten a title. We all knew it instantly.

Somewhere in that process, my nephew, Joe Peifer, entered the picture. He was establishing himself as a videographer and offered to condense a four-hour workshop I was doing into a 70-minute video. I consented. It was necessary to re-shape the message for this medium, and it is currently available.

The Ten Principles

Now that you know about its background, I want to share the message that *Doing Good Even Better* conveys. It is important to remember that this book is directed to boards—not management—although management should read it too so they can serve the board well.

1. Organizations always have a purpose. The first duty of a board is to know what that purpose is and to fulfill it in ways acceptable to the members.

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2. Board members serve in a fiduciary capacity. They do not own (the organization); they are trustees, serving on behalf of and are accountable to the members.
3. The board's governance function must be seen as distinct from the role of management. Both are important; each is fulfilled by the other, but they are distinct.
4. The board's role is to determine the ends that are to be achieved while leaving the means to management. The board decides *what*, management decides *how*, and they do it in concert, like one hand washing the other. Collaborative, not adversarial.
5. A board functions as a board only when it is in session—having a meeting. Otherwise the members are just that, members, and as such they do not have the authority of the board.
6. That is why it is so important that boards have productive meetings. The quality of the board's meetings is the quality of its work. Good boards have good meetings. It is that simple.
7. Meetings have only two functions, to inform and to decide. A board is known by the quality of its decisions. Everything else is socializing or whatever!
8. Management must help the board identify the right agenda. Not only does it present the issues, it presents what it proposes as the solution. Having done that, it steps aside and allows the board to decide.
9. Committees can be helpful—it is hard to imagine a board without them—but their role must be defined, and it must always be clear that committees help the board (make decisions). They do not usurp the authority of the board.
10. Board service should be fun. Not every minute of every meeting will be fun, but at the end of the day, members should have a sense of genuine satisfaction. That happens only when board members understand their role and perform it with skill and dedication.

Mindful of these ten principles, proceed with **Doing Good Even Better** – and be joyful about it, always mindful that “The Work is Thine Oh Christ Our Lord...”

Books are available from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) for \$10, plus shipping, and from some bookstores.

Videos are available from www.DoingGoodBetter.com for \$27 plus shipping.

