



Trustee Academy #3: think creatively

Description

Trustees Learning and Development Programme

Always striving to find a better way through lifelong learning



Introduction

Am I good enough at listening? In my early years of ministry, I thought I was quite good at pastoral listening skills. That is, until I attended a ministerial retreat. Over two days, the gathered presbyters were led through a variety of presentations and exercises – all focussed on listening skills.

I came away knowing I had much to learn about a subject in which I thought I was competent. This experience has served as a template for the various contexts where I've found myself over the years. Put simply, approach every new situation with an open mind and, metaphorically, a blank sheet of paper on which to write.

MMHS offers trustees a challenge to discover governance in a unique environment. I trust you will find, as the Trustee Academy develops, that the material each month stimulates each of us to revisit our existing life skills and find something new.

Alan

Legal and Governance

Trustee effectiveness should be at the forefront of the board's collective thinking. The [Charity Governance Code](#) says, 'The board has a key impact on whether a charity thrives'.

For effectiveness to be understood, an annual review should be facilitated, evaluating the role of the board, individual trustees, and the various relationships within and external to the board. The CGI resource [Trustee Board Effectiveness](#) is the ideal primer to stimulate the evaluation process:



Guidance note

Trustee board effectiveness

April 2021

Trustees should devote sufficient time to developing and refreshing their knowledge and skills, including those of communication, to ensure that they continue to make a positive contribution to the board. Being well-informed about the charity, and having a strong command of the issues relevant to the organisation, will generate the respect of other trustees and senior managers.
([Trustee Board Effectiveness](#) p6)

Finance

The focus for this month is reading the cash flow statement. The simple definition of a cash flow statement is:

...a financial statement that provides aggregate data regarding all cash inflows a charity receives from its ongoing operations and external investment sources. It also includes all cash outflows that pay for business activities and investments during a given period.
www.investopedia.com

CHARITIES SORP (FRS 102)

(second edition - October 2019)

Accounting and Reporting by Charities:
Statement of Recommended Practice
applicable to charities preparing their
accounts in accordance with the Financial
Reporting Standard applicable in the UK
and Republic of Ireland

(FRS 102)

(effective 1 January 2019)



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES



Secretariat to the Charities SORP



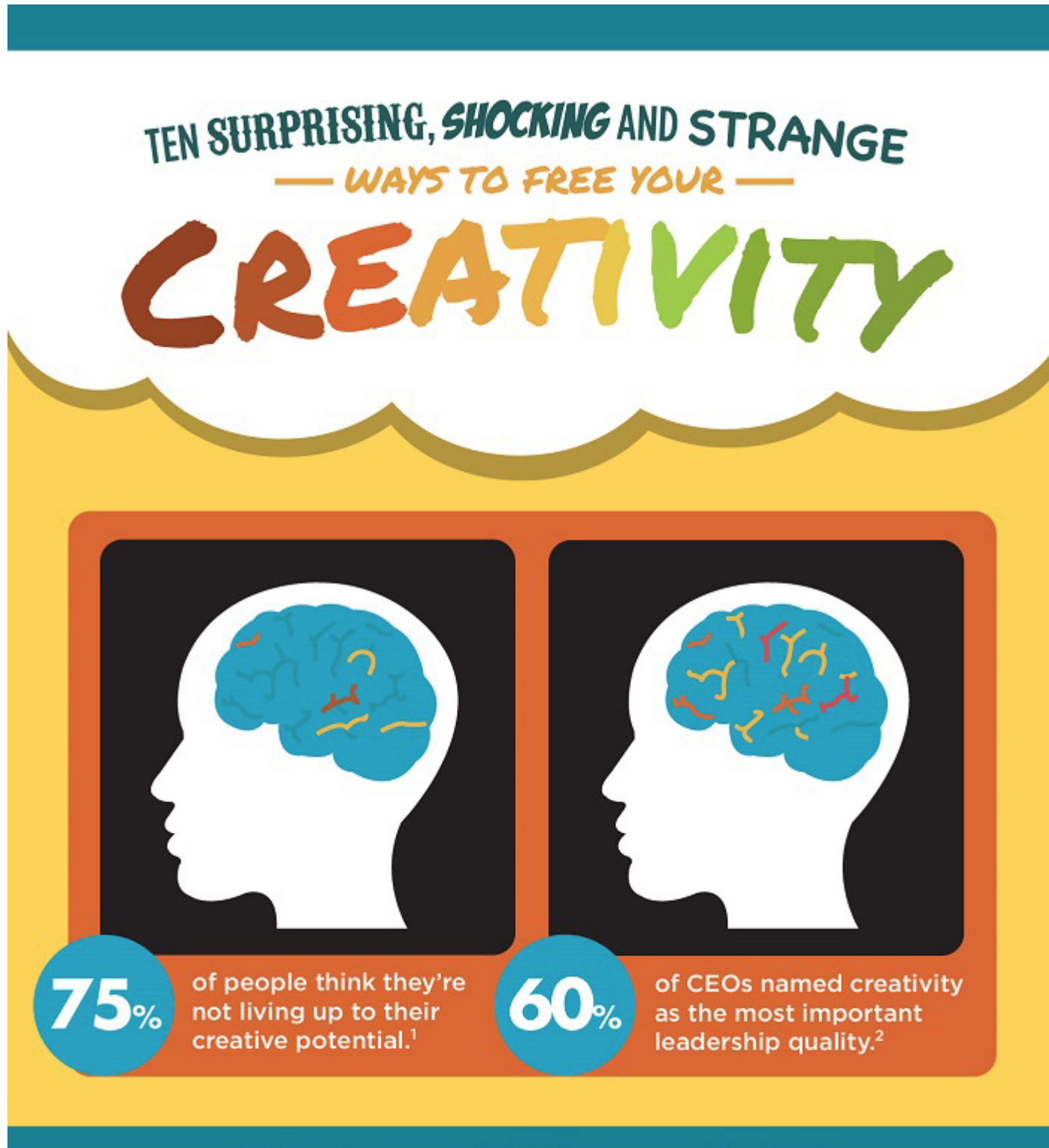
Normally, there would be three sections to a cash flow statement – cash flow from operations, cash flow from investment, and cash flow from financing. MMHS has no cash flow from financing. The relevant pages in the [Charities SORP](#) are 111-117.

It will be a good exercise to have a look at the Board Meeting papers of December 2nd. The cash flow statement is on pages 113-114, especially taking note of the cumulative operating inflow/outflow figures forecast for the current financial year.

Personal Development

Often, it may seem in a trustees' meeting that the function is simply to receive information, then to discuss and make decisions. However, the board is responsible for having a positive impact on the culture of the organisation:

Explicitly linking agenda items and reports to the organisations strategic goals, vision and mission can help shape a culture that provides the best environment for achieving charitable objects.
([Trustee Board Effectiveness](#) p25).



This team approach to effectiveness is strongly influenced by individual trustees thinking creatively, which is the theme this month for personal development. *Mindtools* is a great resource for this. As a starter, have a look at these two links:

- a fun infographic [*Ten Surprising, Shocking And Strange Ways To Free Your Creativity*](#);
- an audio recording which is a book review but describes the authors' tips on how to think creatively, [*The Five Elements Of Effective Thinking*](#).

Category

1. Bulletins

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