

A member of Association X has never served on a national board of directors before and is very excited to be attending his first board meeting. "Charlie" is a little nervous, but eagerly anticipates the board orientation portion of the meeting because it will clarify what he will be doing for the next two years.

After several hours, the orientation portion of the meeting is over and Charlie finds his head swimming with terms like fiduciary responsibilities, confidentiality, duty of obedience... the list goes on. He wonders what all that has to do with being a board member and making decisions. He decides not to worry too much about it at that time and instead focuses on understanding the goals and objectives in the strategic plan.

Several months and a few board meetings later, Charlie runs into a colleague at a cocktail party who strikes up a conversation about a recent board decision and asks Charlie why he voted the way he did. It's clear the colleague has learned how certain members of the board voted. Charlie feels exposed and unsure what to do. He mumbles something about not being able to talk about that and the colleague continues to press him saying, "We've been friends for a long time, you can talk about it to me." Charlie starts to mentally kick himself for being so vocal about the topic during the board meeting.

The next day, Charlie calls the board president in a panic and tells her what happened. The president calls the executive