



# Stimulating Innovation

November 22, 2017

Bahar Gidwani

# Hired to Stimulate Innovation

- ◆ Board hired a new CEO with an unusual background:
  - ♣ Little experience running an NGO—not a politician!
  - ♣ Familiar with high growth and market disruption. Marketing and tech skills.
- ◆ Objective of encouraging innovation:
  - ♣ Grow membership.
  - ♣ Fix technology.
  - ♣ Encourage fresh thinking.

# Requires Some Culture Change

- ◆ Many positive aspects to culture:
  - ♣ Members are intelligent, personally successful, and want to 'win.'
  - ♣ Staff is well-trained, hard-working, and dedicated to the organization.
  - ♣ Many diverse views but most discourse is respectful.
- ◆ Need to retain and build on the best aspects of the current culture.

# The First Three Steps

- ◆ Increase transparency:
  - ♣ Encourage stakeholders by sharing both progress and plans.
  - ♣ Frank and open dialog with all parties.
- ◆ Challenge accepted wisdom:
  - ♣ Don't accept "It's been tried and failed."
  - ♣ Don't accept "It won't work."
- ◆ Find and build consensus:
  - ♣ Look for agreement on small issues.
  - ♣ Propose bargains and compromises.

# Tools to Drive Things Forward

- ◆ Big Ideas:
  - ♣ Encouraged Board to reflect on its goals.
  - ♣ Brought BoG and Members into the conversation.
- ◆ Monthly staff goals:
  - ♣ Sped up response from a four month cycle to a one month cycle.
  - ♣ Helped staff get credit for its hard work.
- ◆ Clarified tech and marketing plans
  - ♣ Bought CRM; encouraged outside tech.

# Reasonable Progress

- ♥ Broad participation in Big Ideas process. The Board may support developing five or more of them.
- ♥ Staff completed 113 internal projects in four months (July to October). Fixed both smaller and larger problems.
- ♥ Moved forward with CRM install, opening of tech platform, and new marketing programs.

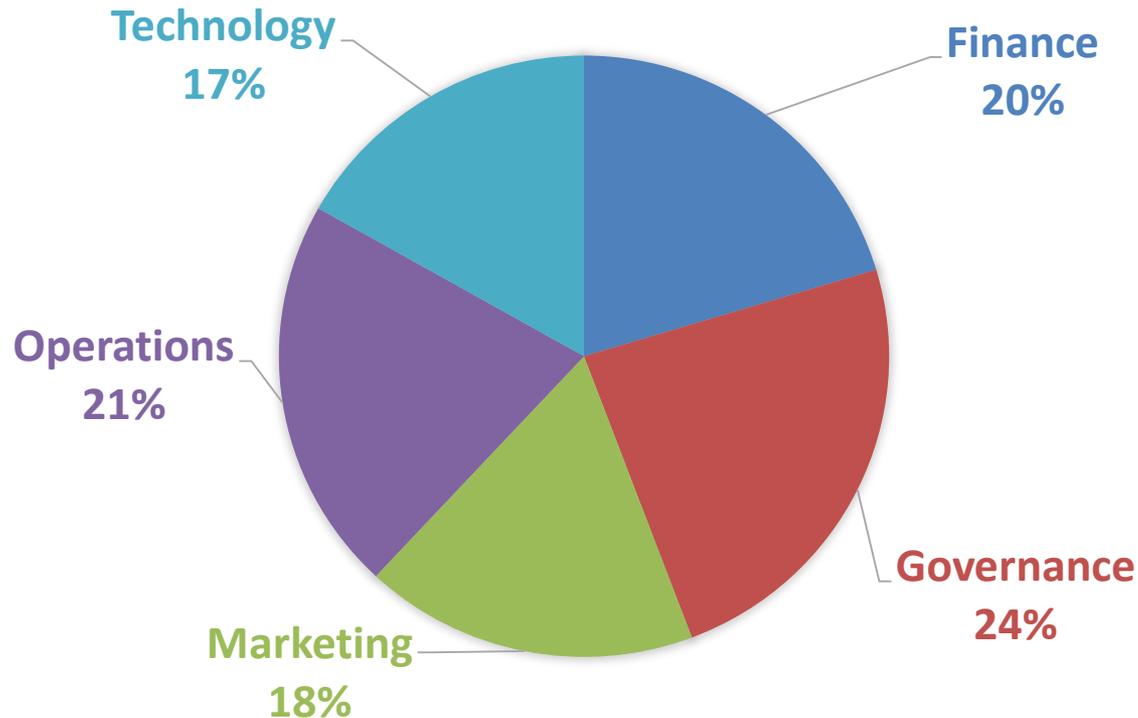
# Big Ideas Engaged Stakeholders

- ♥ Support from all parts of bridge:
  - ♣ 841 members (154 teachers, 63 club managers, 141 volunteers, 51 experts)
  - ♣ 41 members of the BoG and District presidents and secretaries.
  - ♣ Discussion in public forums (e.g., Bridgewinners, District meetings).
  - ♣ Many emails and letters.

*Our communities contribute input; the Board shapes a plan; staff shares the details with everyone and executes the plan.*

# 113 Projects Completed

## STAFF PROJECTS—JULY TO OCTOBER 2017



*Each area contributed to our success.*

# Technology Progress

- ♥ Shifting to loosely coupled from tightly coupled system.
- ♥ Installing CRM. First phase should be done by January.
- ♥ Started certifying replacements for ACBL score game software.
- ♥ Started testing new tournament management technology.
- ♥ Started electronic ticket purchase test.

# What's Next?

- ♠ Staff must continue improving our base operations.
- ♠ Staff must develop detailed plans to implement the first few Big Ideas.
- ♠ We need to continue challenging the bridge community with new ideas.
  - ♦ We are working on 14 new Big Ideas.
  - ♦ We are looking for more good ideas!

# Examples of New Big Ideas

- ♠ Youth (ages 8 to 16) bridge.
- ♠ Club support, integration.
- ♠ Volunteer training & management.
- ♠ Ways to reward pleasant play.
- ♠ Simplification of our discipline system.
- ♠ Role of Units in our strategy.
- ♠ How best to integrate TAs.
- ♠ How to reward Patrons.
- ♠ Access/support for disabled players.

# What We Need from the Board

- ◆ **Stability.** Make a decision, stick with it.
- ◆ **Altruism.** Look beyond your own area and do what is best for everyone.
- ◆ **Fast response.** Help us move faster than we have in the past.
- ◆ **Two-way sharing.** Share ideas with your constituents; share their views with us.
- ◆ **Involvement.** We need Board members' help to get all our Districts involved in our projects.

# In Philadelphia

- ◆ Board reviews detailed plans from San Diego Big Ideas, improves them, and approves those that make sense.
- ◆ Board plans to drive the Big Idea process and “own” it, going forward.
  - ♠ Include Theory of Change and costs in Ideas.
  - ♠ Ideas to Board for additions & improvements.
  - ♠ Review by Strategy Committee & tie to goals.
  - ♠ Survey Board for formal input and trim of list.
  - ♠ Share trimmed idea list with rest of Bridge.
  - ♠ Send ideas and feedback to Committees.

# In Atlanta

- ◆ Board reviews progress on San Diego Big Idea and Philadelphia Big Ideas and helps Staff refine and improve them.
- ◆ Board continues to approve Staff work on worthy Big Ideas and launch new ones.
- ◆ After a year of trying to spark innovation, we decide if we are making progress or should change course.