Definition of Generative Thinking.

Excerpted from *Governance as Leadership* by Richard Chait, William Ryan, Barbara Taylor.

The hallmark characteristics of the generative mode can be summarized as follows:

. A different view of organizations. Organizations do not travel a straight line and rational course from vision to mission to goals to strategy to execution.

. A different definition of leadership. Leaders enable organizations to confront and move forward on complex, value-laden problems, that defy a “right” answer or “perfect” solution.

. A different mindset. Beyond fiduciary stewardship and strategic partnership, governance is tantamount to leadership.

. A different role. The board becomes an asset that creates added value and comparative advantage for the organization.

. A different way of thinking. Boards are intellectually playful and inventive as well as logical and linear.

. A different notion of work. The board frame higher order problems as well as assesses technical solutions, and asks questions that are more catalytic than operational.

. A different way to do business. The board relies more on retreat-like meetings, teamwork, robust discourse, work at the organization’s boundaries, and performances metrics linked to organizational learning.