Building Stronger Boards

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Odessa College

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Identify

- Develop the Board Profile
- Expand Board Diversity
What Do We Need & Whom Do We Want?

In beginning the search process, the board development committee needs to guide the board in asking the following questions:

1) Thinking about the challenges facing our organization, what characteristics, skills, experience, and backgrounds will we need in the next 3-5 years?

2) What personal qualities are important for our board members?

3) What is the current composition of our board?

4) What gaps will we need to fill over the next few years?
Cultivate

• Develop a Pool of Potential Board Members

• Cultivate Relationships
Where to find suggestions for board members

• Colleagues
• Board members of other nonprofits
• Articles & reports in the local media
• Board members
• Local leadership programs
• Current volunteers
• Current committee or task force members
• Local government
Whom to consider for board membership

• Community leaders
• Executives of local corporations
• Owners of small businesses
• Individuals in professions related to the organization’s mission
• People who have benefited from the organization’s services
• People who have an affinity with the mission
Where to look for potential board members

• Religious institutions and congregations
• Major corporations’ outreach programs
• Trade, professional, and fraternal associations
• Local businesses
• Local colleges, community colleges, and universities
• Clubs (retired professionals)
Recruit

• Explore Interest and Mutual Fit
• Prepare for Nomination & Election
• Formal Nomination & Election
Materials to share when recruiting

• Annual reports
• Brochures
• Board roster
• Newsletters
• Social media info.
• Schedule of board meetings
• R&R of the board
• R&R of individual board members
• Brief history/fact sheet
• Committee job descriptions
• Calendar of committee meetings
Orient

• Prepare New Members for Active Participation

• Conduct an Orientation
Involve

• Get Everyone Engaged with the Work of the Board

• Work to Develop the Board as an Inclusive Team

• Clarify Responsibilities
Develop ways to involve board members

• Clearly stated objectives for each meeting
• Use of consent agendas for routine decisions & reports
• Time set aside for questions and discussion
• Participation as a “whole” rather than a few who dominate discussion
• A chair who keeps the discussion focused and moving forward
Barriers keeping members not involved

- Members received insufficient or ineffective orientation
- The executive committee is too active
- Agendas are weak
- Members do not feel well used
- There is little or no opportunity for discussion = frustration
- Members who are allowed to monopolize the discussion
- Board participation has become routine after many years of service
Educate

• Create Regular Opportunities for Board Education
Evaluate

• Assess the Board’s Performance
Rotate

• Keep the Board Fresh
Celebrate!

• Appreciate Efforts & Celebrate Achievements