

BOARD MEMBER ACTIVITIES TO HELP WITH FUND RAISING

Not every board director is willing or able to “open a door,” visit a prospect or donor in person to educate and inform them about your organization and ask for a contribution. However, there are many other important things you can do, in partnership with staff, to help with the cultivation and fund raising process. These activities help attract the financial resources that provide stability to your organization. Here are some suggestions. In each category, add your own ideas:

INTRODUCING YOUR ORGANIZATION TO NEW PEOPLE

- Provide 10-20 new names for the mailing list annually, especially for invitations for special events and mailing of the annual report if available.
- If appropriate, provide information on these individuals’ giving capacity and level of interest to determine which names may warrant a personal contact from the organization.
- Provide entrée for staff to visit two or three close friends or colleagues – no solicitation, just “getting to know you” visits.
- Keep on the look-out all year long for potential board directors who could add value to your board. Familiarize yourself with the criteria and expectations for board membership.
- Share your passion for your organization’s mission with people in your day-to-day life (e.g., business associates, those in your social network, neighbors, friends, etc.).
- Using a list of prepared questions, visit with community leaders to find out what they think/know about your organization (e.g., the demand for your services, feedback regarding the way you have been doing your existing work) and to glean new ideas, issues and approaches you had not considered.

FOCUS ON DONATIONS

- Make your own gift or upgrade your current giving.
- Help identify major gifts prospects and collaborate with staff to create individualized cultivation and stewardship plans.
- Participate in the cultivation efforts (taking donors or prospects to lunch, giving facility tours, sending birthday greetings, etc.). You do not have to know the person.
- Help research grant opportunities; review lists of boards of foundations to see if you have any connections.
- Put the organization in your will, sign over an unneeded life insurance policy or create some other type of legacy gift.
- Attend your organization’s special events and invite your friends and colleagues. Continue to cultivate/educate/engage these people post-event.

- Hold a “parlor party” at your home for a special, targeted group of prospects or donors.
 - Ask community groups in which you hold membership to sponsor events to benefit your organization.
 - Call to thank donors who make monthly gifts, contributions at a designated level or who have been giving for years.
 - Call donors just to update them on the organization’s accomplishments.
 - Take pictures of the programs in action and e-mail them with a note to donors and potential donors about your experience (be sure that any confidentiality issues are respected).
 - Volunteer to “work” a fund raising event.
 - Ask friends to honor your life events (wedding anniversary, birthday, loss of a loved one, etc.) by making a donation to your organization in lieu of a gift.
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BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Attend workshops/seminars/webinars on fund raising and board governance.
 - Annually update and reorganize the board orientation process and request that all board directors attend – current as well as new. Each board director should say why he or she serves, so everyone is reminded at least annually why the organization is so important.
 - Review all organization programs and make a site visit to the entire facility at least once a year.
 - Help your organization create a legacy society to recognize donors who have made a bequest or crafted some other type of planned gift.
 - Help create a welcome package for new donors.
 - Help create gift acceptance and donor recognition policies for your organization.
 - Be sure that fund raising is included in your annual retreat/strategic planning meetings.
 - Support an adequate budget for continuing education for development staff and board directors.
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PUBLIC RELATIONS/ADVOCACY

- Learn how to advocate for your organization’s mission on a political level as appropriate.
- Ask staff or another board director to train you to speak about the organization. Then join the organization’s speaker’s bureau.
- Call donors and thank them for their gifts and interest. Ask them why they support the organization. Tell them why you do.

- Learn the organization’s talking points so you can easily and quickly tell it’s story in any given situation.
- Invite the executive director and/or development professional from your organization to a community function as your guests.
- Add your organization’s website as a link on your e-mail signature, and on your letterhead.
- Add information about your board service and the organization on your LinkedIn profile.
- Talk about your involvement with your organization on your facebook page or other social media as appropriate.
- Help write a case for support for your organization.
