

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR USE WITH POTENTIAL BOARD DIRECTORS

Rarely will perfect board directors appear on your doorstep and announce themselves. One way to determine whether someone is right for your board is to ask a series of questions that get at that person's interest in your organization and ability to meet the responsibilities of board service at this particular time. Try some of the questions below or develop your own list of favorites.

1. What do you see bringing to this board that will make you a good director?
2. What is it about our mission/vision that attracts you?
3. What do you see as the responsibilities of the board as a whole? As the responsibilities of each individual on the board?
4. What do you think is the most important job of a board director?
5. How do you understand your duties of care, loyalty and obedience?
6. What experience with serving on boards do you have?
7. Share an example of where that board really stepped up to the plate?
8. What decision screens do you think any nonprofit should use, regardless of its mission or stage of development?
9. Describe how you respond when discussions of controversial topics come up.
10. Rate yourself on your ability to keep an open mind when a subject heats up.
11. Describe a situation where you found yourself getting tense in the middle of a heated discussion. How did you handle the situation? How was it resolved?
12. What are some of your favorite questions to determine whether a project is worth pursuing?
13. What information do you like to have before making go/no-go decisions?
14. If the pros and cons of a situation seem to balance each other out, how do you make your decisions?
15. Describe a situation where you were willing to take a risk. How did it turn out?
16. Rate on a scale of 1 – 5 your level of risk-acceptance in business matters.
17. Describe how you try to lessen your chances of failure when faced with a new challenge.
18. Describe a situation where you failed. What lessons did you learn from that situation?
19. When you look at cost what elements most concern you?
20. You've indicated that you don't have that much experience with nonprofits. Would that make you more likely to sit and listen to your colleagues in order to learn from them or pepper them with questions?
21. How do you handle a situation in which everyone else seems gung-ho to proceed with a project with which you see problems ahead?
22. Where would you put yourself on a continuum where 1 indicated, "I'm most comfortable listening to others and voting with the majority," and 5 indicated "I'm very proud of the fact that most groups call me a maverick and start to glower when I open my mouth"?
23. How would you deal with a situation in which...? One example might be, you heard the treasurer announce an anticipated deficit in excess of \$50,000.