

MAKE YOUR MEETINGS WITH POTENTIAL BOARD DIRECTORS COUNT

Don't take the chance of losing a great board director because you let the niceties – or even the essentials – slip through cracks. Increase your attractiveness factor and potential impact on each individual by following these common-sense steps.

1. Email each contact and explain that (*Name*) referred them to your organization and that you would appreciate having the opportunity to meet with them, explain a little bit about your organization, and – if they are interested in getting involved – seeing where they might feel that their skills and interests best fit. Add that you would also welcome the names of others that might be interested, once they know a little about you. Let them know that you will follow up on (*Specific Upcoming Date*).
2. Call and say that you are following up on the email you sent on (*Previous Date*). Ask for a date that you can meet. Set a specific time and place. Ask if they would please send their resume or bio so that you can better prepare for the meeting.
3. Immediately email or mail a short descriptive piece or two about your organization with a cover note indicating your appreciation for their willingness to meet and reiterating the time and place.
4. At the meeting, begin by asking if they have any questions based on what you sent or what they may have heard from the friend/colleague that recommended them. Fill in a few key facts about your organization and its successes (keep to a maximum of 3 minutes). Share with them the ways that you use volunteers, including the board. You may indicate that the board is a current priority, but that there are a lot of very high expectations of those serving on the board, and that if this is something that interests them, it would have to be a top priority in their lives. If they still express interest in the board, tell them that you will send them a job description. Meanwhile, ask a few well-thought-out questions. Ask for their questions and the names of any others you should follow up with.
5. Send a quick thank you “for meeting with me today” when you get back to the office. Remark on something you learned that intrigued you and let them know when you expect to get back to them. Welcome their questions in the meanwhile.
6. If you decide this is someone you want on the board, be sure that you have sent that person a copy of the job description. Call him/her, express the desire to get to know the person a bit better and have him/her learn a little more about your organization. Invite the person to your center for a tour and to talk to a couple people who know the program and what it has accomplished. Ask questions about the person’s interest in and capacity for serving. If at the end both of you are still interested, ask the person to join the board. (You might have to explain that you are rebuilding the board from scratch if they wonder why they aren’t meeting other board directors.)
7. Make sure all others are thanked again and given the opportunity to participate in some manner.