Strategic Recruitment & Engagement

About BoardSource

- Enables organizations to fulfill their missions by helping them build effective boards
- Resource for practical information, tools, and best practices, as well as training and leadership development for board members of nonprofit organizations
- Formerly the National Center for Nonprofit Boards
David Livingston Styers

- Senior Governance Consultant at BoardSource
- Director, Consulting Services / Senior Board Governance Consultant at Center for Volunteer and Nonprofit Leadership
- Former Senior Director, Points of Light
- International, National, and Local Board Member, Officer, and Chair Experience

Agenda

- Introduction
- The 9-Step Board Building Cycle
- Generate Board Building Strategies for Your Board
It won’t take much time. We can talk about fundraising later. We just need your name.

Demands for the future

- **Effectiveness**
  - Outcomes and Results

- **Efficiency**
  - Money, Time, and Energy

- **Accountability**
  - Trustworthiness

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The Board Building Cycle

Step 1: IDENTIFY Board Needs

- Skills, knowledge, perspectives, and connections for strategic planning
- Board needs assessment
- Identify sources of board members with the desired characteristics
# Board Needs

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Board Diversity

Mental Maps

- Pool of all possible data
- Select data
- Interpret data
- Reach conclusions
- Take action

Mental Map / Deeply Held Belief
Board Composition

- Ethnic Representation
  - 82% are Caucasian
  - 8% African American/Black
  - 3% Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
  - 2.6% Asian
  - 0.6% American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 0.9% Two or more races
  - 0.2% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Source: BoardSource Nonprofit Governance Index 2012
Avoid Tokenism

- No board member wants to fill a quota – Identifying needs will help focus skills, knowledge, and representation

- No one is able to represent an entire subsection of the population

- Treat each board member equally and expect the same from everyone
Three Strategies for Building an Inclusive Board

1. **Communicate**
   - Facilitate Discussions
   - Appoint a Task Force
   - Develop Your Case Statement

2. **Assess**
   - Organizational & Board Culture
   - Board Needs

3. **Commit**
   - Assign Roles & Responsibilities
   - Measure Results

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Step 2: **CULTIVATE** Potential Leaders

- Ask current board members, senior staff, and others to suggest potential candidates with needed characteristics
- Invite these candidates to connect with the organization
- Get them interested in your organization, and keep them informed
Trajectory of Volunteers

- Founder / Volunteers
- Campaign Donors / Volunteers
- Events / Episodic Volunteers
- Projects / On-going Volunteers
- Governance Volunteers

Not every person needs or wants to be a board member

- Interests
- Motivation
- Constraints
- Working Style
- Expectations
- What else?
Step 3: RECRUIT Prospects

- Describe why a prospective board member is wanted and needed
- Explain expectations and responsibilities and don’t minimize requirements
- Invite questions, elicit their interest, and find out if they would be prepared to serve
- Recruit a diverse board

Tools Needed to Effectively Recruit Board Members

1. Do you have a job description for board members
2. What are the benefits of serving on your board
3. What are you going to do to support them as board members
SAMPLE Board Member Agreement

- Fiscal responsibilities
- Legal responsibilities
- Moral responsibilities
- Financial responsibilities
- Fundraising responsibilities
- Ambassadorial responsibilities
- Meetings responsibilities

SAMPLE Benefits for Board Members

- Using skills to improve nonprofit, effect change, and have an impact
- Feeling good by doing good
- Collaborating with interesting people
- Learning new skills
- Enjoying being recognized for their efforts
- Wanting to give back to the community
- Having fun
SAMPLE Commitment to Board Members

- Provide timely information
- Make best possible use of assets
- Ensure best meeting management practices
- Respond to questions and concerns
- Encourage feedback and criticism
- Do utmost to be an organization of which you can be extremely proud

The Board Building Cycle

Identify ✓
Rotate
Cultivate ✓
Recruit ✓
Orient
Evaluate
Celebrate!
Educate
Involve
The Board Building Cycle

- Identify
- Cultivate
- Recruit
- Orient
- Involve
- Educate
- Evaluate
- Rotate
- Celebrate!

Step 4: ORIENT New Members

To the organization:
- History
- Programs
- Pressing issues
- Finances
- Facilities
- Structure (organization chart)

To the board:
- Committee structure
- Board member responsibilities
- List of board members and key staff
- Bylaws
- Recent minutes
## Orientation Tips and Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Tips</strong></th>
<th><strong>Tools</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Be honest, but don’t overwhelm</td>
<td>• Orientation meeting</td>
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<td>• Include full board</td>
<td>• Board handbook</td>
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<td>• Make room for team building</td>
<td>• Site visit/facilities tour</td>
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<td>• Follow up with individuals</td>
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## Step 5: INVOLVE

- Discover board member interests and availability
- Involve them in committees or task forces
- Assign them a board “buddy”
- Solicit feedback
- Hold everyone accountable
- Express appreciation
Step 6: EDUCATE

• Provide information on mission and services
• Explore issues facing the organization
• Hold retreats and encourage board development activities by sending board members to seminars and workshops
• Don’t hide difficulties

Exercise: Recruiting

1. Please pair up and choose roles: A and B
2. Take a minute to think about key things you would say to someone you want to recruit for your organization’s board
3. A: Take 3 minutes to make your pitch while B listens
4. Then: All As hold up your hand and all Bs go find another A
5. B: Take 3 minutes to make your pitch while A listens
The Board Building Cycle

Identify √

Cultivate √

Recruit √

Orient √

Involve √

Educate √

Involve √

Educate √

Involve √

Next

Evaluate

Celebrate!

Rotate

Identify √

Cultivate √

Recruit √

Orient √

Involve √
Step 7: EVALUATE Board

- Evaluate the board as a whole, as well as individual board members
  - Engage the board in assessing its own performance
  - Encourage individual self-assessment
- Examine how the board and chief executive work as a team

POP QUIZ: Board Self-Assessment

- What percentage of boards report doing a formal, written evaluation of their performance?

ANSWER: 65%
Areas Needing Improvement?

• If your board were to conduct a self-assessment, what do you think would emerge as areas needing improvement?

POP QUIZ: Term Limits

• Concerning term limits, boards should have them:

  a) Never  
     73% have term limits; most common is
  b) Always  
     2 terms of 3 years
  c) Every so often
  d) It depends  
     No automatic re-election
Step 8: ROTATE Board Members

- Establish term limits (and enforce them!)
- Do not automatically re-elect; consider the board’s needs and the member’s performance
- Explore the advisability of resigning with members who are not active
- Develop new leadership

Board Member Renewal Exercise

Handling Common Board Challenges

- Waning attendance
- Inactive committees
- Poor percentage of board giving
- Rubber stamping
- Chief executive turnover
Step 9: CELEBRATE!

- Recognize victories and progress – even small ones
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Appreciate individual contributions – to the board, the organization, and the community
- Make room for humor and a good laugh

The Board Building Cycle
Governance Committee

- Lead board recruitment, orientation, and education efforts
- Encourage ongoing board development
- Help clarify board roles and responsibilities
- Assess board effectiveness
- Ensure board leadership, including succession planning and nominations

Nominating vs. Governance Committee

**Nominating**
- Short-term
- Narrow focus
  - Elections
  - Officers
- Self-contained

**Governance**
- Ongoing
- Holistic focus
  - Composition
  - Policies and Practices
- Involves others
Exercise: Generate Board-Building Ideas

• On your own, come up with one or two ideas that might strengthen your board.
• Write them down
• Take 3 minutes

The Board Building Cycle

- Identify
- Rotate
- Cultivate
- Evaluate
- Recruit
- Celebrate!
- Orient
- Educate
- Involve
Instructions: Idea Hunt

• Your mission is to get three ideas from other participants
• Take your ideas to share with others
• Talk to at least three people – none of whom can be sitting next to you
• Write down ideas you learned

Questions All Boards Should be Asking

• Do we have the right leaders in place to lead us into tomorrow?
• Do we have a governance structure in place that allows the board to function effectively?
• Are we talking about the right things/the issues of greatest importance?
• Do we have a culture in our boardroom that welcomes diversity and new perspectives?
“The main point is to first get the right people on the bus (and the wrong people off the bus) before you figure out where to drive it.”

Jim Collins, *Good to Great*