

## Unraveling Development | Create a Menu of Choices for Board Members

Involving your board members in relationship building and fund development begins with the screening interview. You know, back when your organization interviews a candidate for board membership. Right then, organization leadership communicates performance expectations to the candidate. And the candidate agrees to the performance expectations prior to nomination – or you don't nominate the candidate!

Here's what I include about philanthropy and fund development in my standard performance expectations for all board members – no exceptions. No exceptions at all!

- Help support the charitable contributions operation of the organization. Specifically:
  - o Reach into diverse communities and help identify and cultivate relationships to support the organization as donors, volunteers, and advocates.
  - o Give an annual financial contribution to the best of personal ability. Consider this organization one of your top 2 – 3 charitable commitments. If the organization launches a capital program, give to that, too.
  - o Participate in the fund development by taking on various tasks tailored to your comfort and skills.

In addition to these performance expectations, I also like offering a menu of opportunities at the start of each fiscal year. The menu of relationship building / fund development opportunities reflect the decisions made in the fund development plan.

Some of the menu items are expected of all board members. In fact, I include the bullets above – part of the board member performance expectations – in the annual menu.

Some additional menu items might be required of all board members. For example:

- Make thank-you calls to donors.
- Attend the agency's major fundraising event and mingle and schmooze with guests.
- At least once every two years host a cultivation gathering to introduce the agency to those who might be interested.
- At least once per year, attend a cultivation gathering to nurture relationships with donors.

And then I list specific tasks that board members can choose from. For example, things like:

- Serve on the Fund Development Committee.
- Serve on the ad hoc task force planning the fundraising event.
- Recruit sponsors for the fundraising event.
- Participate in personal face-to-face solicitation with selected donors.

Development staff and key volunteers (maybe the chair of the Fund Development Committee) help board members complete the menu. I also like the idea of tabulating board member responses and creating a grid that lists all tasks and all board member assignments. Of course, everyone gets a copy of this grid. The Fund Development Committee and Board talk about progress, using the grid sometimes. I figure this helps with accountability.

Source: Nonprofit Quarterly

[http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=6426:unraveling-development--create-a-menu-of-choices-for-board-members&catid=145:unraveling-development&Itemid=1006](http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6426:unraveling-development--create-a-menu-of-choices-for-board-members&catid=145:unraveling-development&Itemid=1006)