what motivates board service

• attend 4 or more board meetings (generally in the evening when you might rather be relaxing). The meetings may or may not be interesting.
• work on a committee that may also be meeting in the evening or by conference call when you are working.
• pay for the privilege.
• as a bonus, you get to fundraise.

the value proposition for board service is counterintuitive

motivation

the rewards that motivate board service

• deep personal concern for the achievement of the mission; for the change that the organization can make in the world
• the experience of being part of an effective and supportive group
• the personal satisfaction of having an impact on the direction and viability of the organization
motivation

create a culture that encourages the full engagement of all board members

the evolution of boards

evolution
Board Fundraising Role

- ask everyone you know for help
- run numerous small fundraising events
- may or may not give personal gifts
- provide fundraising oversight
- make significant gifts
- cultivate and solicit major donors
step 1: design meaningful board meetings

meaningful board meetings

attention on strategy and oversight
ED’s report focuses on strategy, not operations
Routine reports are sent in advance
Every issue brought before the board should have been previously addressed by committee

step 2: work should be done in committee
work done in committee

focuses board meetings on strategy and mission moments

effective/supportive groups

step 3:
bring board members to the mission
bring board members to the mission

- establish an expectation that board members will visit programs a certain number of times each year
- require board members to report at a board meeting what they learned on their visits
- occasionally have staff or clients present anecdotes of impact

effective/supportive groups

step 4: agree on and enforce expectations
agree to and enforce expectations

"I can’t do my job if I don’t know what it is and I won’t do it if I’m not sure my teammates are doing theirs as well.”

agree to and enforce expectations

establishing agreed-to expectations for board membership ("a job description")
quantifiable and attitudinal

agree to and enforce expectations

measurable performance standards
board meeting attendance
committee participation
committee or board leadership
personal contributions
fundraising involvement
**effective/supportive groups**

**agreed-to cultural/behavioral norms**
- respect for fellow board members and the work they do in their committees
- readiness to check one’s ego at the door - “it’s not about me”
- willingness to listen to and consider perspectives different from their own
- respect for the dedication and work of the staff
- provision of helpful refinements rather than revisiting the entire question

**step 5: need a structure to manage the work of the board**

**a structure to manage the work**

**establish a board management team**
- on a small board this could be the chair and one other officer with the executive director
- ideally, it would consist of the chair, the executive director, and the committee chairs, some of whom may also be officers (e.g. treasurer)
- the committee would meet between board meetings
a structure to manage the work

what it should do
- plan for and manage board activity
- oversee and coordinate the work of the committees
- develop the agenda for board meetings including whether a matter is for board decision or for information purposes only
- support and evaluate the executive director

managing the division

what an executive committee should NOT do
- make decisions...except in narrow circumstances

rubber stamps

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