

Building Better Boards

- I. Uncovered Myths (Ruby Love)
 - A. Small Boards are More Effective
 - Reality: The reality is that if you are serious about fundraising you need to recruit lots of people to handle all of the activity
 - B. Manifest Their Boards Dedication
 - Reality: Board composition should reflect the people you serve
 - C. Nominating Committee Should Wield the Power of Governance
 - Reality: Nearly everyone nominated is very important
 - D. Real work is done on the Committee level; so don't waste time at the Board meeting.
 - Reality: An uniformed Board will not be involved in meaningful tasks.
 - E. Main concern is to develop an ideal vision of the future organizational direction
 - Reality: Should be working on building relationships as well.
 - F. Board Members have the primary responsibility of fund raising
 - Reality: If members feel that fund raising is their only value, it will not be a successful board.
- II. Not Business as Usual (Neil McReynolds)
 - A. Look differently at boards; ask how can boards add value?
 - B. Basic premise: boards can be very important to the nonprofit sector beyond fundraising ability
 - C. Biggest Mistake: don't just talk names- you need to look at what your organization does and at the strategic plan to ascertain who you need on your board
 - D. Identify Needs: match needs with what you already have on the board, gaps are modified as the strategic plan is modified
 - E. Four Issue Areas:
 - 1. New Blood- believe in term limits
 - 2. Board Expectations- members need to see in writing what is expected of them- no surprises
 - 3. Orientation and Continued Education of Board Members
 - 4. Self-Evaluation- of the organization and the board itself
- III. Successful Boards Have Characteristics in Common (Ed Schumacher)
 - A. Passion for the cause, and being in touch with the cause
 - B. Trust in the CEO
 - C. Vested interest in organizational success
 - D. Satisfied that they are making a difference
 - E. They have FUN- doesn't mean the work is easy, just means that there is a lightheartedness to it.
- IV. Best Use of Board Time
 - A. Does not mean the same thing to everyone, agendas are important as is recognition
 - B. Have reasonable expectations- board members have a life outside of the organization; they will manage what's in their own best interests.
 - C. Ask the question: If I could only get one hour of this person's time, what would I want?