

Do You Have the Right People on Your Board?

Is there a magic bullet for finding the right board members?

By Terrie Temkin

To recruit the “right” people for your board, you must take a strategic approach. You must be intentional every step of the way. Begin by developing a plan. Do so by following the steps below. Then work the plan. While it will take time and energy, the result will be worth it.

Follow These Steps to Create a Board Recruitment Plan

Determine the organization’s overall needs in the coming years if it is to realize its vision. Meet with organizational and board leaders to answer these questions:

What does the organization want to accomplish?

What big projects does the organization intend to undertake?

Define the skill sets, characteristics, and connections required to successfully meet these needs.

Determine the ideal composition of the board, based on the organization’s needs and goals.

Specify your expectations of those you will recruit to the board. For example:

- *passion* for the mission
- *attendance* at meetings
- *financial* commitment
- *involvement* on committees.

Brainstorm the types of people who meet those expectations and who might want to take on these jobs.

Create job descriptions for the board positions you want to fill.

Figure out where you’ll most likely find the type of people you’re looking for. Examples: chambers of commerce, universities, hospitals, houses of worship, clubs.

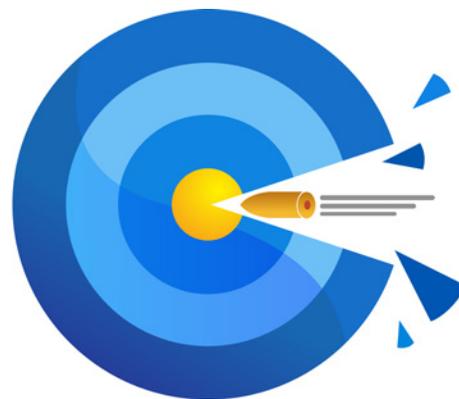
Decide how you can best connect with the types of people you’ve identified. For instance:

Ask people you know in the field to introduce you.

Do research through social media.

Invite people to a special event for potential board directors only.

Hold a “blue ribbon committee” – a small group of community leaders who get together for a single meeting to suggest names of candidates.*



Think about what you can offer the people who agree to serve. Be sure you can answer the question, “Why is your organization worthy of their support?”

Consider ways to cultivate these individuals so they’ll be responsive to your invitation.

Consider how you’ll approach “the ask” to ensure that those who accept your invitation meet the responsibility at the level you require. **S**

**Thanks to Jan Masaoka for the concept of a blue ribbon committee.*

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