



How Can You Eliminate Dead Weight on the Board?

You can't afford to keep board members who don't do their part. But can you ease them out without causing bad feelings?

Q: How do we get rid of board members who aren't pulling their weight?

A: First, call them. Say, "We haven't seen you at the board meeting for a long time." You'll get some amazing answers. Based on the response, you can make the suggestion that they rotate off the board or change their status to committee member or advisory member.

Another way to change the board is with a board commitment letter, written by the nominating committee and approved by the entire board. You can approach the subject with, "We know we asked you to do only. . . . However, we're finding that we can't achieve our mission with this level of support. If you don't have the time to devote to board membership, we hope you'll stay involved by becoming a member of our advisory group." ■

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Downlink Update

Carol Weisman shares other board insights in "Board Development: Building Passion for Mission"—a distance-education course she teaches for the Learning Institute for Nonprofit Organizations. The Learning Institute meets a long-standing need of nonprofits—quality education taught by nationally recognized instructors. Its new Certificate of Excellence in Nonprofit Leadership and Management is based on the following curriculum, delivered to downlink sites across the United States, Canada, Mexico and South America:

September 17, 1998. Strategic Planning: Charting Your Course

October 15, 1998. Resource Development: Unleashing Community Generosity

November 19, 1998. Board Development: Building Passion for Mission

January 21, 1999. Marketing Is Everyone's Business

February 18, 1999. Financial Empowerment: More Mission for Your Money

March 18, 1999. Social Entrepreneurship: Merging Mission and Money

April 15, 1999. Volunteer Involvement: Attracting and Keeping the Best

May 20, 1999. Strategic Alliances: Extending Your Reach

The Learning Institute is a program of the Society for Nonprofit Organizations (6314 Odana Road, Suite 1, Madison, Wisconsin 53719). For more information, please call PBS Adult Learning Services at 800-257-2578.