

Nonprofit Quarterly

Your Fund Development Committee

By Simone Joyaux | February 18, 2010



I want every organization to have a Fund Development Committee. This is a committee of the board, reporting to the board, helping the board fulfill its legal and moral obligations to ensure the health and effectiveness of the organization.

Board member performance expectations include many things, only some of which relate to fund development.

The Fund Development Committee is not responsible for raising the money. The Fund Development Committee helps the board ensure that the money is raised.

A brief digression: Individual board members carry out tasks related to fund development. Staff enables individual board members to carry out these tasks. Every single board member is screened and recruited using a board-adopted policy that outlines board member performance expectations. Board member performance expectations include many things, only some of which relate to fund development.

Keep in mind: The Fund Development Committee doesn't work without staff.

To learn more about enabling, read my previous column, *[Enabling your board members and other fundraising volunteers](#)*. And to learn more about fund development expectations of every single board member, see my column, *[Involving your board members in fund development](#)*.

Now back to that Fund Development Committee. Here's my job description:

Purpose of the Committee: As a committee of the Board of Directors, helps the Board carry out its due diligence function related to assuring fiscal health through philanthropy and fund development. Partners with staff to institutionalize the philanthropic process within the Board and its individual members, assuring a donor-centered organization.

Keep in mind: The Fund Development Committee doesn't work without staff. The staff leader of fund development is doing pretty much everything with the Fund Development Committee—and effectively enabling the committee and board and individuals.

Reports to: Board of Directors and takes direction from the institution's strategic plan.

Staff to the Committee: Development Director (And if you don't have a development director, then the executive director likely provides that leadership and is – in actuality – serving as the development director.)

Committee membership and operations: Members include both Board and non-Board members. All committee work is done in partnership with and through the leadership and enabling of assigned staff. The CEO makes all staff assignments. The committee does not usurp the authority of the Board, and neither directs nor oversees staff.

Frequency of meetings: As necessary, estimated at 6 times per year.

Scope of work for the Fund Development Committee

- Partners with the Governance Committee to assure appropriate articulation of roles and performance expectations in fund development (e.g., for Fund Development Committee, Board, individual board members, staff).
- Devises and recommends philanthropy and fund development policies and recommends to the Board for action, including any limitation policies.
- Helps nurture a culture of philanthropy throughout the organization, and assures that all donors of time and money are respected and honored.
- Assures that the Board and individual Board members are adequately educated about the basic principles and best practices in fund development, including the design of a donor-centered organization.
- Through the fund development planning process: establishes the charitable contributions goals for the annual budget; devises the annual fund development plan for action by the Board; and, recommends results and benchmarks for action by the Board.
- Reviews results and evaluates return on investment (ROI) compared to plan. Identifies trends and implications and engages the Board in strategic dialogue and decision-making regarding philanthropy and fund development.
- Helps the Board articulate the case for philanthropic support directed at specific audiences.
- Establishes task forces to carry out specific fund development activities. Monitors task force performance.
- Provides personal follow-up to individual Board members to monitor their participation.

End of meeting questions (generally applicable to all committees)

1. What do we report to the Board, how and why?
2. What requires strategic dialogue with the Board? What kind of background information will we provide in advance and how will we set the context for the discussion?
3. How can we compliment the work of our Board colleagues?
4. What kind of personal follow-up with Board members and other fundraising volunteers is necessary? Why? Who will do what by when?

To learn more about the role of the board, performance expectations of board members and the screening and recruitment process, visit www.simonjoyaux.com. Click on Resources and visit the Board Development section of the Free Library.

Find this article here:

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