

Why Fundraising is a Board Responsibility

“The word Philanthropy has its roots in the Greek Language meaning ‘love for mankind.’ It was never meant to apply only to donors of thousands or millions of dollars.”

Arthur Frantzreb, Philanthropic Consultant

Role of a Non Profit Board

Board members are responsible for setting organizational direction: your vision, values, mission and goals. The board provides oversight of programs, finances and ethics. Most importantly, they ensure that there is a good mix of resources available for the organization’s success: money, leadership and reputation. Board members must be engaged and active in your organization’s fundraising activities and support all fundraising efforts. Your board is the most important fundraising resource for your organization. To access your board’s level of involvement, answer these questions:

- Do board members have a clear idea of their roles and responsibilities?
- Were they told they are responsible for raising funds before joining the board?
- Do they know they are expected to make an annual gift?
- Do board members know the organization’s mission, goals, objectives, programs and financial needs?
- Are there established board committees, including a development or fundraising committee?

The Nonprofit Board’s Pivotal Role in Philanthropy, Barbara L Ciconte and Roberta A. Healey www.aahsa.org/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=3514

Creating a Fundraising Policy

Do you have a board policy on fundraising? A 2007 BoardSource Survey found 61% of respondents indicated they had a policy requiring board members to make a personal contribution. A sample policy should require that board members:

- Donate to the organization in proportion to their ability
- Support all fundraising efforts of the organization
- Support the organization’s special events by raising money or generating contacts

If you already have these policies in place, consider including:

- Work with the director and staff to create a fundraising plan
- Where possible, supply the organization with names of prospective individual and corporate donors
- Where requested, approach individual or corporate prospects to ask for donations on behalf of the organization or sign letters to these prospects

Board Education

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director or development team to provide board members with the tools needed to be successful fundraisers. Board members must be informed about, and committed to the organization; knowledge and commitment are the two strongest tools anyone asking for a gift can have. Regular, consistent board education and awareness building is needed. These tools will give your board members the confidence to pick up the telephone, knock on a door, and make the appointment to meet with their banker, relative or neighbor and ask for money.

Educate board members on fundraising with workshops, retreats, online PowerPoint presentations, and share fundraising tips regularly. Continually reinforce your shared belief in the organization's mission and values. Assign tasks that involve board members in a fund-raising campaign that require them to solicit gifts. Give them the opportunity to be visible at community events. Partner a board member who is a successful fund-raiser with a new recruit as a mentor. Create opportunities for board members and volunteers to experience the organization.

Tony Poderis, former fundraising director, Cleveland Orchestra <http://www.raise-funds.com/>

For an overview of Nonprofit Fundraising Sources and Approaches go to: http://managementhelp.org/fndrsng/np_raise/fndraise.htm

Follow these useful tips, and you will build a successful, committed and sustainable fundraising environment for your organization.

The Alaska Food Coalition is here to help. Is there a topic you would like to see in an Alaska Food Coalition White Paper? Copies of previous Alaska Food Coalition White Papers are available online: <http://www.alaskafood.org/whitepapers.shtml> For additional information, contact: Vanessa Salinas, Alaska Food Coalition Manager. afc@foodbankofalaska.org

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