

# **Rules of Board/Staff Fundraising Responsibilities: Sharing and Integration**

## **The First Rule**

The board is ultimately responsible for the organization, including its financial resources.

## **The Second Rule**

The board is helpless without strong staff support.

## **Therefore...**

Fundraising is a partnership of board and staff. Neither can be successful without the other.

## **Who Does What?**

### **The Staff's Role in Fundraising**

- Coordinate the overall fundraising efforts.
- Take the initiative and generate ideas.
- Keep files, records, mailing lists, and acknowledgments.
- Do research.
- Prepare correspondence and write proposals.
- Support and involve the board by motivating, recommending, encouraging, restraining, stimulating, and thanking board members, individually and collectively.

### **The Board's Role in Fundraising**

- Define the mission and plan the future of the organization.
- Put the organization in place — hire a chief executive, approve a budget, etc.

### **Board Member Roles in Fundraising**

- Make a financial contribution
- Participate willingly in fundraising activities.

## **Board Fundraising Culture Assessment**

1. Are prospective board members made aware of their fundraising responsibilities before they are elected to the board?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
2. Are fundraising responsibilities and personal giving included in the board member expectation agreement?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
3. Do all or almost all board members make a yearly personal “stretch” gift to the organization’s annual fund?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
4. Does the board chair personally solicit board members annually to ensure appropriate board giving? Does the board chair take time to personally cultivate and steward appropriate higher level prospects and donors?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
5. Does the executive director take time to personally cultivate and steward appropriate higher level prospects and donors?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
6. Does the board’s fundraising committee organize the board’s fundraising rather than actually doing the fundraising itself?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
7. Is the organization’s mission statement clear, concise, and compelling? Can all or almost all board members recite it?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
8. Beyond just reciting the organization’s mission statement, can at least 80 percent of board members convincingly articulate the case for support of the organization?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
9. Does the director of development (or other staff person) identify appropriate cultivation and stewardship opportunities for board member participation?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain



10. Have the chief executive and director of development presented a clear fundraising strategy to the board and solicited board input?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
  
11. Do the chief executive and board chair organize meeting agendas to give clear priority to fundraising?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
  
12. Do the chief executive and board chair plan annually for board training opportunities in fundraising?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain
  
13. Do the chief executive, board chair, and director of development publicly acknowledge and recognize board members who are fulfilling their fundraising responsibilities?  
yes    no    sort of / maybe / not certain

From David Sternberg, *Fearless Fundraising for Nonprofit Boards*, Second Edition (BoardSource, 2008).

## **Making the Ask: Role Play**

### **Instructions**

1. You have been divided into groups of four and assigned the following identities:
  - #1 – Board Member
  - #2 – Director of Development
  - #3 – Potential Donor
  - #4 – Observer
  
2. Read through all identities and assume you are making a request on behalf of your organization. Assume that #1 and #3 have a personal connection and this is not a “cold call.”
  - #1. Board Member
    - Play yourself.
  
  - #2. Director of Development
    - You have been on staff for three years.
    - You have strong knowledge of the organization’s programs.
    - The organization has determined that this prospect is ready to be asked for an annual gift.
  
  - #3. Prospect
    - You are involved in your community and serve on another nonprofit board.
    - You have never made a donation to the organization.
    - You are married and have two teenage children.
    - You and your spouse earn \$145,000 a year.
    - As a baby boomer, you need to feel as though every dollar you contribute
  
  - #4. Observers
    - You are there to observe the solicitation and share their thoughts and reflections during the debrief that will follow the role play.
  
3. #1 and #2 should take 5 minutes to plan their solicitation using the tips below. At the same time, #3 and 4 can put themselves in the shoes of #1 and 2 and discuss amongst themselves how they would approach the solicitation while they wait for #1 and #2 to make their pitch.

Tips for Approaching a Prospect

- a. Start with small talk to establish warmth and rapport.
  - b. Introduce the subject
    - “We are here to...”
    - Describe the opportunity/need and what is needed to address this opportunity/need.
    - Engage the prospect with questions: What do you think are our biggest challenges? How might you address them?
    - Summarize your understanding of the prospect’s perspective and ask, “Is this correct?”
    - After concurrence, ask, “Would you like to hear how our (program service, activities) will meet this need?” This leads into the presentation by creating interest and desire.
  - c. Get to the point
    - Explain your own involvement in the organization.
    - “Let me tell you why I have made a gift...”
    - Invite the prospect to join you.
  - d. Be prepared to explain
    - Why the prospect would be interested.
    - The values exchange or benefit to the prospect.
  - e. Make the close
    - Ask your prospect, “Do you think our programs and plans will solve the problem(s)?”
    - Prepare to handle objections and provide reassurances.
    - State the benefits of meeting the need and ask the prospect to join or become a part of the organization and its campaign.
    - Re-establish areas of agreement.
    - Find areas of disagreement and convert them to agreement.
    - Suggest something different, such as “Before you make your final decision, may we suggest...”
    - Continue the process as long as rapport has been maintained and you have something new to add.
4. Spend 5 minutes role playing and “making the ask.”

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## Plans for the Future

What are your boards willing to undertake to assist in the fundraising process?

	Already Doing	Begin/Increase Doing
Make a meaningful personal contribution		
Understand, endorse, and contribute to planning		
Help identify, evaluate, and cultivate prospects		
Provide a list of potential donors		
Make introductions to and personal contact with prospects		
Show prospects the facilities		
Share accomplishments and enthusiasm for the organization		
Write/review the case statement		
Write personal notes on annual appeals and make personal phone calls		
Accompany others in asking		
Solicit funds and make the ask for a contribution		
Write supporting and "thank you" letters		
Organize and attend special events		

	Already Doing	Begin/Increase Doing
Send letters of appreciation and invitations to special events		
Maintain relationships with donors		
Personally thank donors for their contributions		
Keep donors connected to the organization		