



BOARD BRIEF: Resource Development Responsibilities

Board Briefs are "at-a-glance" resources that help board volunteers better support their Boys & Girls Club. They are designed to occur as five-minute education opportunities at board meetings.

SUMMARY

A Boys & Girls Club mission helps board members powerfully engage others in supporting the organization. To effectively grow, the board must foster a culture of philanthropy and engage staff to gain and maintain support from the community and key stakeholders. Board members have two general areas of responsibility in terms of resource development: 1) understanding and overseeing the fundraising process; and 2) personally giving and advocating support for the Club. Too often, we focus on the "ask" and many board members find themselves reluctant to participate. If the following principles are understood by your board and accepted as standard practice in your Club organization, you can develop the culture that can drive your Club forward to achieve your mission and vision for the kids you serve.

THE NEED FOR STRONG OVERSIGHT

#1: The board alone is responsible for securing resources.

Resource development encompasses three broad areas of organizational capacity.

- People: human involvement and leadership, both volunteers and staff
- Image: public awareness of the Club and an understanding of its mission
- Money: revenue from fundraising and other activities

The board secures resources through three primary actions:

- ⇒ Resource Acquisition. Board members secure resources by making a personal gift, asking others to make a gift, and actively participating in resource development events.
- ⇒ Resource Development Planning. The full board works with the RD Committee to draft, approve, support, critique and participate in the Club's resource development plan.
- ⇒ Hiring CEO. The board ensures the leader has skills to: plan, involve, conduct, manage and evaluate resource RD activities; and hire other staff with appropriate skills.

#2: Strong organizations are led by a partnership between the Board Chair and the CEO.

Effective executive performance is supported by boards who to provide a working environment that enables top leaders to succeed. Although staff normally lead the administrative support of the resource development process, the participation of board members is essential.

#3: Asking for and giving money are natural processes, not something to be avoided.

People give money because they want to. No matter how basic this concept is to philanthropy, many often let fear of failure prevent them from asking potential investors to support their Club.

Never think you need to apologize for asking someone to give to a worthy object...

John D. Rockefeller

Instead of inaction, recognize that asking for support provides a chance to do something to make a difference and gain satisfaction from helping their community. Remember, people:

- Give to people
- Give money to success, not to distress
- Want to make a change for the good
- Rarely give unless they are asked

#4: Board members should be able to make the case for supporting the organization.

Every Club should have a case for support created by board and staff for all potential funders. The case explains why the Club exists, why support is needed and why the Club is worthy of investment. It is imperative that all board members understand the case, with each able to articulate the powerful impact a gift would have on the ability of the Club to serve youth.

#5: Every board member can support RD efforts by utilizing their own skills and interests.

Too often, board members focus on the “ask” portion of RD process. However, solicitation is only about 10% of the process; the other 90% is preparation and follow-up. Not every board member is skilled in the art of asking, but every member can contribute to creating a culture of philanthropy by identifying, cultivating and stewarding potential funders. The RD Committee should create opportunities for all board members to contribute to the process.

#6: Motivation of board members is the most critical and the most difficult task of all.

To motivate as many board members as possible, begin with an inspiring and passionate leader to lead the RD Committee. Professional staff can support the board by providing materials to limit the number of tasks assigned at one time. Recommend that members take small steps, celebrate even small successes, and then encourage them to take on more responsibility. By managing the process carefully and strategically, members will help your Club be successful.

SUMMARY CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING

- Committed Leaders – Board Chair, CEO and all board members have patience, enthusiasm
- Supportive Staff – Driven, well-written and well-spoken committed fundraisers
- Strategic Planning – Led by a vision, realistic plans with board and staff buy-in
- Resource Development Plan – Comprehensive, diverse with short- and long-term tactics
- Case Statement – addresses motivation of individuals, foundations, corporations, etc.
- Procedures – proposal process, mailing lists and database, stewardship plans
- Research – sound, methodical donor research