

10 Questions To Ask Before You Join A Nonprofit Board

Posted on March 22, 2014 by Ellis Carter • 0 Comments

Joining a nonprofit board of directors is a major commitment. While board service can be one of the most rewarding ways to give back, a bad fit or poor performance can lead to a difficult and even potentially costly board service experience. If asked to join a nonprofit Board, consider the following questions:



1. Are you passionate about the organization's mission and vision?
2. Will you be able to serve for the expected term and attend the majority of meetings?
3. What are the expectations of board members?
4. What contribution is expected from you as a board member beyond board service (Time, Talent, Treasure)?

5. Does the nonprofit have D&O insurance?
6. How committed is the nonprofit to compliance? (Ask to see its audited financial statements and Form 990)
7. How receptive is the nonprofit's leader to recommendations made by the board?
8. Has the nonprofit ever been sued? If so, for what?
9. What is the nonprofit's financial health? Does it have cash reserves or does it struggle to pay overhead expenses?
10. Are you passionate enough about this nonprofit to donate your money to it and ask your friends and family to donate?

If, after exploring the above, your responses to questions 1 and 10 are a resounding YES! and the rest of the information doesn't scare you, ask to participate in a board meeting as a guest. You may even ask to review the board book including articles, bylaws, organizational charts and policies to get a better sense of the organization's operations and structure. Careful due diligence prior to joining a board will help ensure a positive board experience.

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Filed Under: Governance
