

FIELD NOTES



TRANSFORMING YOUR BOARD

"We weren't required to fundraise when I joined the board."

"I work the golf outing, so that's my participation in the annual campaign."

"It's the staff's job to raise the money."

Any of these sound familiar?

We have the pleasure of working with many non-profit leaders and have yet to find one who doesn't deal with these same issues. Before you give up on your volunteers, consider the following ways in which you can transform your board members' attitudes and abilities toward fundraising.

Most boards have at least a few members who are willing to take on a fundraising role. You will likely have to spend some time nurturing their potential. **After all, if donor relationships are so important, then how can we skip the step of board member relationships?**

First, identify these board members, and ask them to work with staff members on the annual campaign plan.

New campaign leaders may worry that not all board members have an interest in the campaign. That's okay. It usually doesn't happen the first year. There must be a realistic balance between challenging the entire board to participate and keeping key players engaged and motivated.

Recognize progress and success stories at all meetings and identify prospective board campaigners to work with for the next campaign.

In order to truly transform your board, **you, as staff leaders, must commit to nurture, train and grow the interest of your board members one by one.**



Leaders who take this approach create amazing results. Their volunteer leaders are more committed. The board as a whole becomes stronger and focused on what's important. Momentum builds.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

- **Don't assume** your board members understand their role and your expectations. Explain and remind often.
- **100/20/50:** Jack Lund, former CEO, YMCA of Greater New York, recommends that 100% of the board gives 20% of the campaign goal and raises 50% of the goal.

- **Challenge your board** to take on a portion of your campaign as the Board's "project." For example: can the board give and get enough funds to support 500 kids in next year's afterschool program?
- **Recruit captains** for the board "projects" and **draft ALL board members to teams.** Whether they all participate or not, you are sending a clear message that this is an important role.
- **Discuss ways to motivate your board** with your campaign leaders. If they truly know their peers, they may have a better sense of what will inspire the team.
- **Tie your strategic plan to your fundraising efforts.** Boards get excited about new initiatives they want to achieve in the coming five years, but they often forget about the resources required to achieve them. Make sure your board understands that financial support is paramount to achieve these goals and that staff cannot do it alone.

Looking for additional help to transform your board? Contact us for more information on trainings, consulting services and resources to help your volunteers succeed as fundraisers and as leaders!
info@donorbydesign.com

