

The “Triple A” Board of Directors

Building a Culture of Philanthropy Among Your Board of Directors

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The Culture of Philanthropy

- Members of the Board of Directors, relevant committees (e.g. development / fundraising committee, Ambassador / community Outreach committee, etc.), staff, volunteers and donors are actively engaged in the work of development for the benefit of your organization
- Everyone is committed to the mission, vision, and values of your organization
- Universal understanding that each interaction with anyone in your community is part of the development process
- Everyone understands the purpose and significance of your organization and is passionate about the services provided
- Visitors, donors, volunteers and clients sense the culture of your organization during each interaction and feel welcome to join your team

The Components of a “Triple A” Board

- Ambassador
- Advocate
- Asker

The Ambassador

- Every member of your Board of Directors, committees, and staff, are Ambassadors for your organization
- Ambassadors are key to the cultivation of prospective donors, volunteers, and other supporters and point persons for your organization in the work of building and enhancing relationships with current donors, volunteers, and other supporters
- Ambassadors must be thoroughly familiar with your organization, your message, and your “case for support”
- Ambassadors are masters of the “elevator speech”
- Ambassadors are catalysts for turning first-time donors Into lifetime donors

Duties Of An Ambassador

- Identifies and cultivates potential donors, volunteers, and other supporters
- Invites potential donors, volunteers, and other supporters to functions, events, special tours, etc.
- Works to build and enhance relationships with current and potential donors, volunteers, and other supporters through sending hand-written thank you notes, making unexpected “Thank you” calls to donors, volunteers, and other supporters, and serving as a host at volunteer and donor appreciation events
- Serves as a host at fundraising events and other functions

The Advocate

- Advocates strategically share their passion for your organization wherever, whenever, and with whoever appropriate
- Advocates may assist in building and enhancing relationships with pertinent officials, foundation officers, and representatives of other organizations with whom your organization interfaces
- Advocates, like Ambassadors, must be thoroughly familiar with your organization, your message, and your “case for support”
- Advocates have a comprehensive understanding of your strategic plan and the vision of your organization
- Advocates understand the goals of personal advocacy, are skilled at its practice, are adept at handling objections, and are undaunted by rejection

Duties Of An Advocate

- Host private donor cultivation or appreciation gatherings
- Represents your organization at public functions (both those of your organization and other organizations in your community)
- Gives public presentations on behalf of your organization
- Makes calls to officials, foundation officers, and representatives of other organizations with whom your organization interfaces when necessary and appropriate
- Works with staff and appropriate members of your Board of Directors and committees to create strategies to identify and engage potential donors, volunteers, and other supporters

The Asker

- Askers donate regularly to your organization
- Askers enjoy sharing their enthusiasm for your organization with others and inviting them to support your organization
- Askers are well informed about your organization, your message, and your “case for support”
- Askers aren’t afraid of the word, “No”
- Askers benefit from the work of the Ambassadors and Advocates

Duties Of An Asker

- Leads or participates in making requests to current and potential new donors to invest in your organization
- Helps draft and/or signs letters asking for gifts
- Makes follow up calls to current and potential new donors after meetings or events or after they have received a letter requesting a gift
- Seeks sponsorships for special events and/or promotes donations, table purchases, ticket sales, etc.

Development Related Core Duties For Every Member Of Your Board Of Directors

- 100% giving! Every member of your Board of Directors must make an annual donation to your organization (this does not include tickets purchased for your events, etc.)
- Attend your major fundraisers and serve as hosts
- Attend your annual volunteer and/or donor appreciation reception(s)
- Make unexpected “Thank you” calls to donors
- Volunteer at least twice year serving your clients
- Be an Ambassador for your organization
- Be an Advocate and Asker when appropriate

Recruiting “Triple A” Members For Your Board Of Directors

- Is the individual passionate about your mission? *(the motivation to act springs from passion about your organization, its programs and services, and the clients you serve)*
- Will they bring new donors and new circles of influence to your organization?
- Are they a team player?
- Do they have a sense of humor?
- Are they willing to make an annual gift to your organization particularly one that may be a stretch for them? *(if they aren't willing to give --- and give generously --- to your organization, why should anyone else be willing to give generously and how can they someone else to do so?)*

Recruiting “Triple A” Members For Your Board Of Directors

- Do they bring unique skills or assets to your organization?
- What role, or roles, are they qualified and willing to fill:
Ambassador, Advocate, or Asker?
- Do they understand that your Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for your organization’s success?
- Do they understand that success not only requires strong, efficient, relevant, and smoothly operated program and services but also raising the funds necessary to implement and maintain your programs and services?
- Do they understand that your Board of Directors is a VITAL link between your organization and your community?

Don't Forget . . .

- Appreciate them and thank them!
- The members of your Board of Directors are volunteers
- The members of your Board of Directors have busy professional (*in many cases*) and personal lives (*in all cases*)
- You can't run your organization without them! (*Their service to your organization is critical to its success and their contributions are priceless*)
- You are all on the same team
- Keep them regularly informed
- Like everyone, they want to feel valued and useful and want to know their contributions make a difference
- Appreciate them and thank them again!

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