

Board Chair Job Description

The following description was adapted from materials from BoardSource. Note that materials apply to both for-profit and nonprofit unless otherwise noted.

1. Is a member of the Board
2. Serves as the Chief Volunteer of the organization (*nonprofit only*)
3. Is a partner with the Chief Executive in achieving the organization's mission
4. Provides leadership to the Board of Directors, who sets policy and to whom the Chief Executive is accountable.
5. Chairs meetings of the Board after developing the agenda with the Chief Executive.
6. Encourages Board's role in strategic planning
7. Appoints the chairpersons of committees, in consultation with other Board Members.
8. Serves *ex officio* as a member of committees and attends their meetings when invited.
9. Discusses issues confronting the organization with the Chief Executive.
10. Helps guide and mediate Board actions with respect to organizational priorities and governance concerns.
11. Reviews with the Chief Executive any issues of concern to the Board.
12. Monitors financial planning and financial reports.
13. Plays a leading role in fundraising activities (*nonprofit only*)
14. Formally evaluates the performance of the Chief Executive and informally evaluates the effectiveness of the Board Members.
15. Evaluates annually the performance of the organization in achieving its mission.
16. Performs other responsibilities assigned by the Board.

Nonprofit Job Requirements

Specifically, members must:

- Be prepared to contribute their time, money and other resources. Directors should be prepared to contribute financially to the work of the organization or find individuals who are willing to contribute. In addition, directors should willingly contribute their expertise (e.g. marketing, lobbying, accounting, legal, etc) to further the aims of the organization.
- Participate fully on board committees as assigned. This means attend meetings,

read the necessary documents ahead of time and be prepared to discuss the issues at hand. Committee meetings are the place where key issues are discussed, analyzed and resolved. Recommendations for board action are formulated at the committee level.

- Recruit, hire, and monitor the work of the executive director. The executive director is an employee of the board and as such is required to implement policy. It is not the job of the board to engage in the management of day to day operations.
- Advocate on behalf of the organization – directors must be prepared to promote the views of the organization in order to secure funding, legislation and other support for the organization. This requires an informed board member.
- Ensure compliance with regulations and accrediting bodies
- Approve the budget
- Report to the president of the board of directors. Individual agendas must be subordinate to the aims of the organization. Acting out of self interest is to be discouraged.
- Keep discussions and reports confidential.
- Provide input into the strategic plan and monitor the organization's progress towards achieving established goals.

Using the Nonprofit Job Description

The job description is an excellent tool to use during the recruitment of prospective members, the orientation of new members and evaluation of current directors. During recruitment, it can be used to inform prospects about the extent of their duties so they can make an informed decision about whether or not to join. As part of orientation, the job description helps outline the expectations for member behavior while it also serves as a method for reminding current directors of their responsibilities.

Board President Job Descriptions

- *Ensure that members understand their jobs and are able to fulfill those expectations.* This is achieved by providing a thorough orientation of new members, offering board development and education to make sure that members have the skills that they need as well as monitoring their performance and intervening as appropriate.
- *Help recruit new members and develop succession plans for committee chairs.* The president needs to be sure that there is the right number of board members with the optimal set of skills needed by the organization.
- *Provide structure so that the work of the board and organization can be accomplished.* For example the president must ensure that there is an agenda for each meeting, minutes are kept and reviewed as well as reports provided in advance of the meeting to allow for a complete review and consideration of the issues by the board.
- *Preside over the meetings.* In this capacity the president makes sure that the

topics on the agenda are given complete consideration, that consensus is achieved and that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. The president needs to balance thorough discussion with efficiency in moving through the agenda.

- *Ensure that management tools are developed and implemented.* These tools include a three year strategic plan, annual action plans, a budget, human resources plan, to name a few.
- *Work with the committee chairs.* The president may serve as an ex officio member of the board's various committees. Depending on the by-laws of the organization, the president may be a nonvoting member. The president should work with each committee chair to identify potential problems or issues and help the chair to resolve them
- *Work closely with while not micromanaging the executive director.* The president provides advice and acts as a sounding board. In conjunction with the personnel committee, the board president ensures that an annual evaluation of the CEO is conducted and that the CEO is compensated fairly.
- *Serve as a link to community.* According to the job description outlined in an [article by Nathan Garber](#), the board president must work with the media, constituents of the organization, funders and legislators to create positive working relationships and promote the organization. The president must be prepared to act as the public face of the organization addressing issues with the media, lobbying for key legislation and promoting the organization to prospective donors.

The board president of a nonprofit organization is accountable for leading the members of the board and making sure that the mission and vision of the organization are achieved. Understanding the elements of the job help bring about success.