



With an estimated 25 % of board members rotating off nonprofit boards annually there is a need for 225 000 new board volunteers to govern over 160 000 nonprofit agencies in a sector that contributes \$112 billion in revenues to the Canadian economy.

(Source: "Cornerstones of Community" - NSNVO - September 2004)

I Want to Join a Volunteer Board...or Do I?

**MAKING IT HAPPEN...
Taking Stock of Your Time, Talent, and Treasure**

Am I ready to make a commitment to a board?

Do I have what it takes to contribute effectively at the board level?

What causes do I truly care about?

How will I know which board suits my interests and availability?

Will they expect me to raise funds for the organization?

My time is so scarce now - how will I fit in yet another commitment?

What will I gain from a board experience?

IF YOU ARE ASKING YOURSELF ANY OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS THEN TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING SELF-REFLECTION PROCESS. THIS TOOL IS MEANT AS A PERSONAL GUIDE TO ASSIST YOU IN YOUR DECISION TO JOIN A VOLUNTEER BOARD.

"The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn"

Ralph Waldo Emerson

WHY DO I WANT TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

What appeals to me about board service beyond other volunteer opportunities?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity to develop my leadership skills in director's governance role | <input type="checkbox"/> Business/personal networking opportunities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Status (enhance my C.V., earn respect of colleagues/associates, enhance CSR profile for my company, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Wish to enhance knowledge of board governance and/or the charitable sector |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desire to get involved but prefer "arm's length" approach rather than direct service | <input type="checkbox"/> Considering a career change or planning for retirement and want to explore a new skill/sector |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal experience/passion in a particular cause | <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity to give back to the community and share my knowledge, skills, and resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Add balance and a different perspective to working life | <input type="checkbox"/> It's part of my yearly goals and/or life plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To get involved in a charity that relates to my family life and personal values (ex. sports, religious or spiritual community, children's activities, recreation, health challenges, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:

_____ |

HOW FAR AM I WILLING TO TRAVEL?

Board meetings are generally scheduled on weekday evenings. Consider your commute time between work and home when reflecting on this question.

- | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toronto - GTA
___ Downtown - Central
___ East Toronto
___ North Toronto
___ West Toronto | <input type="checkbox"/> Burlington | <input type="checkbox"/> Mississauga | <input type="checkbox"/> York Region |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brampton | <input type="checkbox"/> Durham Region | <input type="checkbox"/> Oakville | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

WHERE DO I WANT TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

What sectors interest me the most?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addiction and Substance Abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing and Homelessness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights and Civil Liberties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children | <input type="checkbox"/> International Aid and Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community and Social Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Poverty and Social Justice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal Justice | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Spiritual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Culture and Heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disabilities and Special Needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Settlement Services
(Immigrants/Refugees) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Enterprise |
| ___ Literacy | |
| ___ Skills Development | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment and Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports and Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth |
| ___ Animals | |
| ___ Parks and Wilderness | |
| ___ Other: _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans) | <input type="checkbox"/> Women |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Diseases (including mental health issues) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

WHAT EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE AM I WILLING TO SHARE AT THE BOARD TABLE?

What's in it for the charity?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting and Financial Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Systems/Software |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Labour Relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children/Youth issues and services | <input type="checkbox"/> Land use/planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications/Public Relations/Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity/Access and equity | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing/Advertising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational/Strategic Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneur | <input type="checkbox"/> Project Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors issues and services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports and recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Medical | <input type="checkbox"/> Website Development/Maintenance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Women's issues and services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional
hobbies/interests/skills/experiences not
listed that would add value to a voluntary
board: |
- _____

WHAT SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE DO I WISH TO DEVELOP AT THE BOARD TABLE?

What's in it for me?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chairing meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring and outcome evaluation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications/Marketing/Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiation/Mediation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Resolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Networking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counselling | <input type="checkbox"/> Program development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Event planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Policy development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Public speaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising/Resource Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Team building |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Governance | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human resource management | <input type="checkbox"/> Working with diverse teams |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labour relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

MY CONTACTS AND FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

It is generally understood within the charitable sector that board members make a personal financial contribution and assist with fundraising activities on some level.

The amount of time and money contributed for resource development varies according to each individual board member and agency. It is part of the "fit" to consider when joining a board. The Executive Director and Director of Development often utilize the connections of their board as one avenue to explore new relationship opportunities.

- How much money am I willing to contribute to the organization - monthly, yearly, one time donation, gifts-in-kind?
- Am I ready to donate right away or do I wish to familiarize myself with the organization over a period of time first?
- Once I build a relationship with the organization am I willing to tap into my business and personal contacts to explore funding/gift-in-kind opportunities?

WHEN AM I GOING TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

Do I really have time for this? Take a moment to identify your availability to participate in a volunteer board over the next 12 months.

Board meetings vary from 5-10 hours or more per month depending on board type (policy or management) and type of issues facing the board - capital campaigns and other large scale projects require more time than usual. Board terms typically run for 1-3 years.

Boards often strike executive committees to address priority issues (such as hiring an ED). You will likely be expected to assist on a committee during your board term - consider your availability for additional responsibilities and identify projects/events that most interest you.

Realistic timeframe for my board search

- Available immediately
- Available within the next 3-6 months
- Available within the next 6-9 months
- Available within the next 9-12 months

Hours available to dedicate to the board...

- Up to 5 hours
- 5-10 hours
- Other: _____

MY HOTLIST

Rank the following in order of preference from 1 - 15 according to importance in my board search (where 1 is high and 15 is low)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location of board meetings
...close to my home or close to my work? | <input type="checkbox"/> Size of agency
...small "grassroots", mid-size, or large "big name" organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hours required per month
...including meetings and preparation. | <input type="checkbox"/> Type of issues/projects facing the board (such as capital campaign, building development/relocation, program expansion, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mandate of the agency
(Ex. is it important that it relate to personal passions or company sponsorship?) | <input type="checkbox"/> Length of board term
...what's my maximum preferred term? (a typical board term runs from 1-3 years) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Behind the scenes opportunities
...I like to advise on policies or financials - opportunity to contribute but not direct involvement with staff or program recipients. | <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity to have an impact/make a difference and/or share my skills/experience/resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Background, experience, and/or status of board peers | <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to network and build relationships |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Background, experience, and/or status of Executive Director/CEO | <input type="checkbox"/> High profile events/projects underway at agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity to roll up my sleeves and get involved - i.e. strategic planning, labour relations, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dipping my toe in the board governance water
...starting out on a committee - familiarizing myself with the people and programs before diving in. | |

HOW AM I GOING TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

List any current challenges that may prevent your participation as a volunteer board member in the next 12 months

CHALLENGES	RESPONSE
Current or additional family responsibilities	
Pending promotion or career change	
Business travel	
Education/Professional Development	
Undecided on volunteer board preferences	
Hesitant to commit to lengthy board term	
Additional volunteer commitments	
Personal commitments	
New projects underway at work and/or busy season approaching	
Other: _____	

Are you ready to Make It Happen?

Once you have taken the time to reflect on the above questions we hope you are better equipped to determine if the time is right for you to join a volunteer board...

...perhaps the time is now?

For additional information on the BoardMatch Leaders Program contact...

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“Begin each day as if it were on purpose”
 Mary Anne Radmacher