



## “10 KEYS to SUCCESSFUL BOARDS”

Summer is the time on many Foundation Boards or Advancement Oversight Councils when several members rotate off the Board and several members rotate onto the Board. What are some keys to effective Foundation Board? Read on...

**1. Effective Nominating Committee** – The nominating committee should be well organized, have a clear sense of recruiting priorities as well as expectations for individual board members especially in the area of fund-raising. If the nominating committee or board recruiting committee is poorly organized, board members in turn are not likely to have a good understanding of the organization and their role as board members.

**2. Enlist Board Members Who Share Your Vision** – It is important to recruit Board members who already support the organizations purpose and vision for the future. This is not the time to work to make converts. This doesn't mean that over the years prospective Board members can't be groomed, but bring them on board when they are ready and supportive.

**3. Recruit Board Members Who Work Well with Others** – It is important to recruit Board members who have healthy personalities, who work well with others, who are amiable and friendly, who know how to communicate with others, and who know how to compromise and work things out amicably with others. Try to avoid abrasive, problematic personalities.

**4. Recruit the Most Prominent, Successful People Possible** – The Board members are the key representatives of your Foundation. Recruit the best people possible. Recruit busy, self-starting, productive, and successful people.

**5. Recruit Big Thinkers** – Every Foundation or Advancement Program and organization can grow more and do more. Enlist Board members who see the opportunities for growth.

**6. Enlist Board Members Who Can Open Doors** – Board members can open doors to prospective donors, to leaders in the community, and to greater numbers of volunteers. Recruit connected and social Board members.

**7. Orient Board Members** – Once Board members have been recruited, take a morning, evening, day, or a weekend for orientation. Review the organization's history; its mission, vision, values, and strategic plan; review the Foundation's main activities; introduce them to other key staff members; and share with them the strategic plan for the future.

**8. Rotation Plan** – There should be a rotation plan in place to bring new Board members on every year. A Board member term could be for three years, with a maximum of two three-year terms. In a rapidly changing world, rotation of Board members brings new people, new ideas, new perspectives, and new connections.

**9. Large Enough Board** – While it is difficult to specify an appropriate size for all boards, in general, a board should range in number from 11 to 21 members. You need enough members to lead and form the core of the committees and, in general, share in the other work of the board. We also need sufficient numbers to reflect the desired diversity in the board as well as assure the range of viewpoints that spurs innovation and creativity in board planning and decision-making.

**10. Plan, Plan, Plan** – The main job of the Board is to guide and oversee the Director and Foundation Team, raise money to benefit the organization, open doors to new donors, and support the Foundation strategic planning process.

**A strong Foundation Board or Advancement Oversight Council is key to a non-profit's growth and ability to fulfill its mission! VisionWorks specializes in helping organizations create and grow their Foundations and Advancement Programs.**

Contact Mark Filips, president of VisionWorks at 888.948.1113 or [markf@VisionWorksCo.com](mailto:markf@VisionWorksCo.com) so that we may help you with your Foundation or Advancement Program 1) creation, 2) assessment and 3) strategic planning.