

Basics of Board Development

Development of the board of directors is the most fundamental activity needed to build and maintain a strong nucleus for a nonprofit organization. It is a responsibility that boards should put near the top of the list of priorities.

The steps in the development of the board are:

- **Nomination and Recruitment** — the process of identifying the right individual to meet the needs of the organization and convincing her to become part of the organization.
- **Orientation** — the steps taken to give new board members information on the background, programs, and culture of the organization.
- **Training** — the regular efforts to build new skills and abilities among existing board members.
- **Evaluation** — the annual task of evaluating individual board member's contributions to the board, and evaluating the board's contribution to the individual board members.
- **Recognition** — the on-going process of recognizing work well-done and thanking board members for their commitment and the contributions they make to the organization.

Each of these elements of board development are critical to the organization's success. For this reason, most boards will develop a specific committee responsible for these board development tasks. Often the committee is called the Nominations Committee or Board Development Committee.

These issues and procedures are applicable not only to the development of board members, but also to the development of non-board committee members and other key volunteers.