

Commonly Accepted Board Expectations

Expectation 1. *The roles and responsibilities of board members should be spelled out in a board job description or in a written policy with copies distributed to all board members.*

Expectation 2. *Board members should be required to participate in the organization's fundraising activities.*

Expectation 3. *Annually, board members should personally contribute money to the organization, not just give time.*

Expectation 4. *Recruiting board members should be a year round activity, not just when there is a vacancy.*

Expectation 5. *Board members should leave the board after two or three consecutive terms.*

Expectation 6. *Board members should develop, write, and adopt organizational policies, as needed.*

Expectation 7. *Board members should attend all board meetings.*

Expectation 8. *Board members should have a developed interview process that is used with all board Candidates to personally inform the candidates about the organization's mission, goals, financial condition, and the time and effort that will be expected of them as board members.*

Expectation 9. *Besides providing information during the recruitment phase, the board should provide new board members with additional orientation and training.*

Expectation 10. *Board members should be terminated or quit if they miss three or more consecutive board or Committee meetings.*

Expectation 11. *The board should have guidelines and use them to remove board members who fail to meet the board's minimum expectations.*

Expectation 12. *Board members should be collegial by encouraging each other to participate in board and Committee meetings and invite different viewpoints including disagreement.*

Expectation 13. *The board chair should create a spirit of unity among the board and ensure that board meetings and the work of the board is effective, ethical and meaningful.*

Expectation 14. *The board should not accept everyone who wants to serve on the board.*

Instead, the board should have a thoughtful and deliberate recruitment process that systematically identifies the characteristics and skills that would be desired in new board members.

Expectation 15. *Because the board has ultimate responsibility for the organization, the board should be concerned about its performance and have a formal method for evaluating individual board members and the board as a whole. These evaluations should occur at least annually.*

Expectation 16. *Annually, the board should evaluate the performance of its executive director and based on its findings, the board should either fire or reward him/her.*

Expectation 17. *If a board does not undertake to carryout substantive tasks on their own, then the executive director needs to initiate and follow through on the process, but attribute success to the board.*

Expectation 18. *The board should be expected to define and evaluate the organization's mission; approve the budget, establish or adopt plans, ensure financial controls, and perpetuate the existence of the board.*

This study assessed non-profit board chairs and executive directors' agreement with these expectations using a survey that included 30 questions which addressed the 18 expectations.

Block, S. R. (2005). *On nonprofit board governance: Do the heroes believe in our expectations?* Unpublished manuscript, Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado at Denver & Health Sciences Center, Denver, CO, Retrieved from <http://bloch2.umkc.edu/mwcnl/Conferences/GovernanceConf2005/Post Conference Materials.pdf>