

Development for Conservation

Building the Board you Need (and Will Need)

Presented at

OR / WA Land Camp

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David Allen, Development for Conservation



**DEVELOPMENT
FOR
CONSERVATION**

Job Responsibilities of a Board

- Governance
- Management
- Fundraising
- Celebration



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Desirable Attributes / Board

- Visible
- Trustworthy / Transparent
- Capable
- Diverse



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WHY Diversity?

*Any board that agrees on everything is either uninformed or **lazy**. Think about it. If everyone in the meeting has the same opinion, why should any one member do their **homework**?*

*Diversity creates **deeper conversations** which leads to **more thoughtful** decisions.*



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-Network for Good

WHY Diversity?

- Diverse Boards are **more sustainable** and resilient.
- Diverse Boards are more likely to make **better decisions** in the long run.
- Diverse Boards have **greater access** to talent and money.



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Desirable Attributes / Members

- Passionate About the Mission
- Leadership
- Plays Well with Others
- Smart, Curious, and Willing to Learn
- Personal Integrity and Good Judgement
- Credibility
- Strategic and Analytical Thinking Skills
- Sense of Humor



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Common Complaints

- Our Board is getting older; we need to recruit younger people
- We approached great people to be on the Board, but they turned us down
- We need a ^{woman, person of color, young person, farmer,} lawyer and a CPA, but we can't find any
- We need rich people on the Board for fundraising, but we don't know any rich people



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Rethinking the Recruitment Process




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What do Board Members Do?

- Show up
- Give money; Raise money
- Know the projects; Know the finances; Know how to tell the Story
- Advocate / Defend
- Serve as Ambassadors back into their communities



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We know these people! They are our friends! →

People who are smart, curious, credible, skilled, knowledgeable, capable, and so on.

Dedicated Volunteers

Bright, Shiny, Objects

People who already LOVE us; they support the mission financially

People who are seen as leaders in their communities

Great Donors

BOARD MEMBERS



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Ideas

Recruit from existing supporters

- Recruit from a deep Bench
- Recruit ACCESS




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Ideas

Establish Term Limits

- Sustainability comes from capable, orderly self-replication
- Self-replication comes from Term Limits



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Ideas

Approach Board recruitment as you would major gift donor cultivation

- Board service is a major gift – for the *donor*. Treat it that way.
- The people you need most are probably not available to you right away.
- They might need to be introduced to the idea, wooed, and ultimately solicited.



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Ideas

Cluster Recruiting

- Identify Barriers to Participation



Also think about ...

- Ambassadorship
How will your Board members take your organization back to their communities?
- Long-Term Leadership Needs
Who will be Chair next year? Five years from now?



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Rethinking the Orientation




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Re-Think

- Re-Think in terms of showing new board members what you want them to know.
- Re-Think in terms of practice.
- Re-Think in terms of the story they will tell others.



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1st Year Scavenger Hunt

- Sit in on one meeting of each board committee,
- Sign the Conflict of Interest Policy and Confidentiality Statements,
- Visit a program or work party in progress,
- Develop and practice an “elevator speech,”
- Call a donor to say thank you,
- Attend an organizational event. ✓



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1st Year Scavenger Hunt

- Sit down with the Conservation Director or Conservation Chair and have them explain the Strategic Conservation Plan and Project Selection Criteria to you.
- Go on a Monitoring Visit – meet the landowner.
- Go on a Field Trip led by a naturalist.
- Lead a field trip to that same preserve. ✓



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Board Evaluations



A cartoon showing a man in a suit holding a clipboard and speaking to another man. The speech bubble says "YOUR OVERALL RATING IS 'FERAL.'"

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Job Responsibilities of a Board Director

- Governance
- Management
- Fundraising
- Celebration



A cartoon of a dog sitting in a doghouse. A woman is talking to the dog. The dog says "I WAS FOOLED BY THE JOB DESCRIPTION." The woman says "I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED WHY YOU DECIDED TO BE A DOG."

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The Job – Board Director

- Show up
- Give money; Raise money
- Know the projects; Know the finances; Know how to tell the Story
- Advocate / Defend
- Serve as Ambassadors back into their communities



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Board Evaluations

- Chair
 - Know, follow, and manage as needed the work of ALL the other committees.
 - ~~Hold other board directors accountable.~~
Create a culture of Integrity.
 - Annually conduct one-on-one interviews with each board director to discuss current committee assignments, other board related activities, general thoughts and opinions, and his/her own giving for the current year.



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Board Campaign

Board

- Chair, FR Chair, ED set Board goal
- Chair sets the tone, makes his/her gift first
- Chair solicits other Board members
- First Quarter Activity
- Pledges OK




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Board Campaign Mechanics

www.DevelopmentForConservation.com/about-us/resources



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A Practical Guide to Board Campaigns (and Evaluations)

By David Allen, Development for Conservation

January 2014



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Board Campaign Mechanics

Board Campaign Mechanics

January 2014

From the board director's perspective:

1. Face-to-face meeting with a board leader communicates weight and importance. Meeting content is much more broadly about board service in the holistic sense, rather than just financial, and offers significant opportunity for the voicing of interests, passions, and concerns.
2. The revenue side of the budget is discussed in detail to aid understanding of the role directors can play in revenue generation. The portion that board giving represents is clearly understood, and a clear connection is made all the way back to the strategic conservation goals.
3. Past giving is reviewed and appreciated.
4. Current year's specific ask is clearly and explicitly requested and is seen in the context of the overall board goal. Options for payment are discussed and understood.
5. Commitment is given and pledge form is presented and signed.
6. Receives "Thank you" message from board and staff leadership within days. Eventually shares in the good news that the board goal has been achieved (exceeded?).

Sequencing

1. Board Chair, Executive Director, and DC Chair need to agree on a board goal. The goal should be greater than last year's actual but with a significant feeling that exceeding it is very possible.
2. Board Chair, Executive Director, and DC Chair need to agree on ask amounts *for each director*. The sum of the ask amounts should exceed the goal by at least 10-20%.



Board Campaign Mechanics

3. Board Chair sets appointments with each of the directors. (This task could be shared with the Chair-elect, an Emeritus Chair, the DC Chair, or even the Executive Director, but if the E.D. is used, s/he should be accompanied by another board member.) In general, these appointments should be made in order of ask amount. Ideally these appointments are completed by the end of February (end of March at the latest).
4. The conversations are timed for about an hour. The outline for each appointment should be similar for each director but may vary widely from year to year. Significant attention should be paid to *listening*.
5. Toward the end of the conversation, the Board Chair “makes the case” for board giving, reminds the director of past giving, and asks for the agreed upon amount. There may be some negotiation – indeed there may even be a delay in getting a final answer - but when a final amount is settled upon, that’s when the pledge form is brought out and signed. Pledge forms should not be mailed or even presented before the director has agreed to a specific amount. If an answer is not possible in the moment, the Board Chair and the director agree on specific follow-up steps and a timeline for achieving them.
6. The results of each meeting should be communicated back to staff for processing immediately after each meeting. Processing includes possibly alerting other board leadership and the ED of specific gifts, organizing the acknowledgements, calendaring pledge reminders, and so on.

Benefits

- The process demonstrates and communicates good leadership.
- By March of each year, the board directors will have made their giving intentions known, eliminating some end-of-year anxiety, and providing a very positive answer for those foundations and individuals who ask whether the board gives.
- It’s very good practice to ask and to be asked, and provides great experience for all those involved. The same practices and procedures will be used when asking major gift prospects.
- It opens the door for directors who might not be comfortable writing a large-ish check in December to consider a larger amount by making several payments.



Board Campaign Mechanics

Pre-Interview Data

Name	
Phone	
Email	
Date first joined the board	
Term Limit Date	
Current Committee Assignments	
Leadership History	
Last Year's Gift	
Current Board Goal	
Current Year's Ask Amount	



Board Campaign Mechanics

Sample Interview Questions

- How's it going for you? Any comments, questions, complaints for the management?
- Tell me about your committee experience. Any feedback on the committee process? Are you on the right committees for you? Would you like to be on (a) different committee(s)?
- What could we be doing differently to help you get the most out of your board experience (and the most done)?
- You will be on the board for another _____ years before you rotate off. What would you like to have accomplished before you leave board service?
- For potential leaders – Have you considered taking a leadership position with the organization? We're thinking a good deal in advance – what would you need to do to get ready for such leadership? (*Think in terms of experiences leaders should have before being asked to lead, such as committee service on each committee, experience representing the organization in public, fundraising, and so on.*)
- Let's discuss the 20__ budget. Any questions? On a scale of 1-10, how comfortable are you with what we've taken on? (*Think about asking a specific question about the budget - one that will demonstrate knowledge of the issues – such as a new investment, program, or staff position, or perhaps an investment into endowment.*)
- In the revenue side, do you understand your role in making this happen? (*Ask about building relationships with specific donors.*) What could we do to help make that role easier for you to accomplish?
- This year, our board goal is _____ and I'm pretty sure we can get there. Keeping in mind that quarterly or even monthly pledges are OK, I'd like to ask that you consider a gift toward this goal of _____. Could you do that?



Board Campaign Mechanics

DAVID ALLEN

I am a non-profit organizational development consultant. I work with organization boards to help their members learn how to be better leaders and advocates.

My background includes 30 years working in membership fundraising, major donor development, communications, and marketing. I worked for about half that time for Nature Conservancy (TNC) chapters in Oregon, Texas, and Wisconsin. In addition to my duties for the individual chapters, I served TNC as an internal fundraising consultant and major donor development trainer.



In 2000, I served as the vice-president of operations for the Wisconsin-based, international conservation organization Sand County Foundation, a position I held through mid-2009.

Gathering Waters Conservancy, a land trust service agency based in Wisconsin, called me in 2002 to ask whether I would be interested in teaching a seminar for Wisconsin land trusts on major donor development. From 2002, then, through 2009, I consulted on a nights and weekends basis with just a few clients each year.

In March of 2009, I launched my consulting business full-time using the name **Development for Conservation**.

Also in 2009, I partnered with Peter McKeever, and more recently with Nancy Moore, to form what is now known as **Conservation Consulting Group**. Together we help land trusts prepare for accreditation by providing assessment, planning, and leadership coaching services.

I consider myself a strategic thinker, problem solver, facilitator, educator, and program developer who brings a particular passion for conservation and the environment.

Practice Competencies

Fundraising

- Development Audit
- Staff/Board Training and Development
- Major Gift Coaching
- Capital Campaigns

Organizational Development

- Strategy Development
- Practice & Process Assessment
- Problem Solving Facilitation
- Marketing



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