



# Forming an Effective Development Committee



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The Development Committee is a subset of Board that agrees to engage as impassioned volunteers working alongside development staff to achieve the organization's philanthropic goals. The Committee is responsible for leading the board by example and helping to ensure the ongoing financial stability of the organization and growth of the mission.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS AGREE TO:

- Serve as an extension of the development operation
- Proactively share his/her personal network and develop relationships with potential sources of financial support
- Assist with developing and presenting funding opportunities aligned with both the prospect's interests and the organization's mission
- Make the organization a personal philanthropic priority

## DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Understand the funding objectives and goals of the organization and work alongside the development staff to fulfill the annual fundraising plan
- Assist in identifying and engaging prospects and developing strategies to nurture and grow existing donor relationships
- Invite potential donors to financially support funding opportunities aligned with their interests and the organization's mission
- Participate in strategic donor meetings with development staff and Executive Director
- Help to create annual development goals and present to the Board for approval and ownership
- Monitor short- and long-term funding goals of the organization and report progress to the Board
- Be certain the board is trained and prepared to present a compelling case for support that aligns with the organization's mission and goals
- Ensure all members of the Board have the training, tools, and support to effectively participate in fundraising activities
- Make sure that all Board members contribute financially to the mission

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## **COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE:**

The Development Committee consists of a subset of Board members. If you are establishing a Committee for the first time, consider starting small with one to two members. As the Committee becomes engaged, you can add additional Board members and perhaps even non-board members.

At least one member of the staff, preferably the Director of Development, should be a member of the committee and attend meetings.

## **IDENTIFYING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

If you are looking to establish a Development Committee, we recommend that the Board Chair, Executive Director, and Development Director meet to discuss what qualities and characteristics are needed. Once candidates are identified, the Board Chair and Executive Director should have face-to-face meetings to enlist Committee members and outline expectations.

Once a Committee is established, the Committee Chair can work with the Board Chair to identify and enlist future members.

## **TERM:**

As with regular Board roles, it is important to define a term of commitment for Committee members. We recommend a one-year term to start. This ensures that members take ownership for the fiscal year goals and help to bring new ideas to the Committee on a regular basis.

## **TRAINING:**

Orientation to the development program and expectations of committee members should take place annually. Regular training on the case for support and relationship-based fundraising methods are key to easing the anxiety Committee members may have about fundraising. You can find a wide variety of free, recorded webinar trainings on the Mission Advancement website ([MissionAdvancement.com](http://MissionAdvancement.com)).

## **MEETINGS:**

The Development Committee should meet at least once and perhaps twice between full board meetings. Prior to the meeting, the Development Committee Chair should meet with the Director of Development to discuss the monthly agenda and identify any specific issues to be addressed. The Development Committee Chair publishes the agenda and presides over the meeting.