



Campaign Preparation: Engaging Board Members

Thoughtful preparation of your board is critical to your campaign's success

A campaign is a marathon that requires your full, intensive focus and many resources. Your board plays an important role in a campaign. Taking steps to prepare them in advance of a campaign will improve your success.

Accomplish these three steps with your board before you launch a campaign:

▶ Have a plan in place

- Board members should have a clear picture of your mission, priorities, and funding needs – including what is critical for your organization to accomplish.
- Your board and leadership should develop strategic priorities for the next three to five years.
- Board members should be able to articulate your focus to others, particularly potential donors, including what will be different as a result of a campaign.

▶ Get the right people in place

- Have solid executive and fundraising leadership team members who are committed to the campaign and have time to commit to active campaigning.
- Board members must be committed to your mission, have a strong link to your organization, have a clear understanding of their role and expectations during the campaign, and be ready to demonstrate their commitment to fundraising through their own gift.
- Regularly share fundraising progress reports with the board and discuss specific goals and objectives of the development program.

Successful campaigns feature generous board support

An increase in the average board giving is associated with an increase in the number of million-dollar gifts, according to research conducted by the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy and Johnson, Grossnickle and Associates.*

**Million Dollar Ready: Assessing the Institutional Factors that Lead to Transformational Gifts (2013)*



▶ Ensure agreement about campaign priorities

- Test the proposed campaign plans with prospective donors to determine if donors think the plans are as important as you do and bring these results to the board for discussion.
- Facilitate open, authentic board discussions to review campaign priorities and preparation.
- Have staff present a well-constructed plan and timeline for undertaking the campaign.
- Examine the resources needed for campaign implementation and secure the board's support.
- Ensure board members understand your organization's capacity for philanthropic support before approving a campaign goal.

DISCOVER FOR YOURSELF.

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