

From: Detroit Executive Service Corps [info@esc-detroit.org]
Sent: Thursday, December 10, 2009 9:21 AM
To: Corbin, Mike
Subject: Building a Diverse Board to Strengthen Your Organization

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Dear Friends,

In my years of service to non-profits as a board president, board member and consultant, I've learned a great deal about what makes an excellent board of directors. Here are some tips to help you build up your leadership structure and create a board that will carry your organization forward into the future.

- **Start with passion:** Every member of your board should be able to recite your mission statement and believe in it with great passion. Choose individuals who want your organization to succeed.
- **Build on your strategic plan:** Determine which skills, experience, political connections and community contacts you need to help your organization achieve its mission, then find people who fit those categories.
- **Grow leaders through committee work:** Identify potential board members with leadership skills and commitment, then develop that commitment through committee assignments. Find out if potential members do what they say they will do. Determine how much passion they really have for your organization. Then ask them to join the board.
- **Reflect the community you serve:** Make sure your customers and clients are represented as well. These individuals should meet the skill sets and commitment you would expect of all board members.

"Diversity" is not simply about balancing gender, ethnicity and age, though all of these factors are important. The key to a strong board is strong people. Go out and find them, then watch your organization thrive.

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To learn more about DESC's commitment to board development, [click here](#). A strong community depends on strong nonprofits. We want to help you reach your potential.

Sincerely,
Jerry Knoppow
Board Development Consultant, Detroit Executive Service Corps

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