Disrupt Peer Review
Creating Productive Practices with your Senior Volunteers and Leadership

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Director of Development, Georgetown Hospital Foundation

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Principal, Researcher & Consultant, Tracey Church & Associates
Why do we do peer screening?

- Using your senior volunteers effectively is one of the most important aspects of success in fundraising!
  - Yet, while fundraisers know this, most don’t do regular peer screenings.
  - Why? Because historically they have been awkward, slow, and the volunteers dislike doing them.

- Close *linkages* and *affinity* are two of the most important elements in building relationships with prospective donors.

- Senior volunteers can learn to “*think like a prospect researcher*” in regards to identifying and qualifying prospective donors (individuals, corporations, and foundations) and providing important potential links for solicitation.
What are the roles of the board?

- Set direction for the organization
- Oversight of management
- While governing, control operations and services
- “Guardians of the Mission”
- Make policies, rules, and strategies
- ‘Represent’ the members and stakeholders
- Ensure the organizations meet their goals
- Help raise funds for operations, programming, and campaigns
- Risk oversight
- Ultimate responsibility

McDermott, 2018
### RATINGS OF PERFORMANCE IN KEY AREAS OF BOARD RESPONSIBILITY

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<tr>
<th>Area of Board Performance</th>
<th>Average Grade from Executives</th>
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<td><strong>Strength</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding mission</td>
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<td>Legal &amp; ethical oversight</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level of commitment &amp; involvement</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of programs</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking strategically as a board</td>
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<td>Adopting &amp; following a strategic plan</td>
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<td>Evaluating the chief executive</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring performance against strategic plan</td>
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<td><strong>Solid Performance</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Monitoring legislative &amp; regulatory issues</td>
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<td>Increasing board diversity</td>
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<tr>
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Questions about (fundraising) board roles

- Do you have position descriptions for your board members?
- Do they know what responsibilities they will have?
- Do you have a “Give, or Get” (or Get-Off board member policy)?
- Will board members be surprised if a) asked for money; and, b) be expected to solicit donors?
- Are you “changing the rules” half-way through their tenure?

- Why did they join your board?
  - Did you need their expertise?
  - Did they want to stretch their wings?
  - Is this a networking opportunity for them?
  - Did you ask them?
Getting the right volunteers for peer screening and fundraising

- Not ALL board members will be good at fundraising, and it’s best to identify the ones who are not, or will not be, a *fundraising* asset to your organization.
- BUT, you need to adopt a 100% board giving policy (their best gift).
- AND board members need to:
  - Understand the strategy of fundraising and be able to discuss how your organization is unique.
  - Be engaged.
  - Develop a fundraising plan that is strategic, diverse, and aggressive - but achievable!
Who make your best fundraising and peer screening volunteers?

- Select and recruit senior volunteers from your “key constituents”, those who have a positive impact on the success of your fundraising campaign.
- Your key constituents should mirror your constituent base in regards to:
  - Ethnicity, gender, age, program, areas of interest, and geography.
- Research should be done on these key volunteers to guarantee the organization knows their capacity, linkages, influences, and ability to leverage relationships.
Key volunteers for peer screening

- **Current major donors**
  - Top cash donors
  - Top cumulative donors

- **Top influencers to your organization**
  - Current and past board members
    - Note, senior volunteers are more than just the board members
    - Should you form a volunteer fundraising committee?
  - Volunteers with corporate and foundation contacts
  - Community leaders
    - Elected officials and/or heads of government agencies
  - Internal constituents outside of development office
    - Program directors, institute heads, staff
Peer Screening:
Georgetown Hospital Foundation (GHF)

Real life learnings
The GFH - Who We Are

- Post campaign small fundraising shop looking to increase engagement of current board members and assess candidacy of potential volunteers
- Board is good at governance, not so much at fundraising
- Wants to grow donor base and develop a more robust Major Gift program
- Needs to build a strong pipeline for today and future campaign
- Board roles and expectations have changed mid-term
Peer Screening: GHF Learnings

Flash back 2011: $6.5 million Capital Campaign

- Formal prospect research had been conducted but in the absence of formal Peer Review practices the pipeline was missing some relevant information.
- Informal peer review was utilized to assist with a mini small business campaign. Committee was formed to identify linkages, affinity and capacity.

Outcomes:

- Engaged one of our strongest board members who was extremely comfortable sharing information and facilitating introductions.
- Introduced small business owners to the pipeline and database who were missed &/or dismissed during prospect research process. Information learned during peer review ELEVATED our asks and improved results.
- Secured EIGHT new pledges totaling over $40,000 from local business that would’ve been missed.
Peer Screening: GHF Learnings

Flash Forward 2017/2018…

Operating in a post campaign environment … case for support not as strong. Corporate relationships that were developed during the ‘small business’ campaign are still strong and support of the Foundation has continued.

- Post Campaign we need to build up the pipeline to satisfy current needs and build for future campaign.
- As the Foundation has evolved, board roles have changed ‘mid term’. Discovered a need to educate our volunteers.
- Introduced Tracey Church and a formal peer review process in 2017.
GHF & Peer Screening ...what we learned!

- It’s going to take time and PRACTICE; not everyone is good at it.
- Initial peer review exercise identified gaps around the board table & assisted us in identifying what we needed going forward.
- Staff networks are limited and we rely on the board to leverage their networks and provide a layer of local intelligence to research findings.
- When it comes to fundraising and philanthropy (i.e. not just selling gala tickets) most of our board members don’t know how to help.

SHOW THEM HOW TO HELP!
Lunch & Learn: Show them what you do!

- Senior volunteers and executives mostly have no idea what prospect research and development is.
  - Most senior volunteers (and some senior executives!) come from professions other than fundraising
  - While their heart may be in the right place, they need to be educated in how to fundraise.
    - Surprise! It’s not about golf tournaments!

- In the first 15 minutes of your Lunch & Learn - show them, via presentation, WHAT you do with print screens of some of your resources regarding wealth indicators; real estate and share holdings; and, relationship maps etc.
  - They will be amazed!
Examples of what we CAN get

Biographies

*Canadian Who's Who Biography*

Examples of what we CAN get

Real Estate (by postal code)
Examples of what we CAN get

Real Estate (US)
Examples of what we CAN get

Securities

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Examples of what we CAN get

Executive Compensation
Examples of what we CAN get

Demographics
Examples of what we CAN get

Gifts to Other Organizations

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<th>Name:</th>
<th>Type:</th>
<th>Gift</th>
<th>Gift Type</th>
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[View of a computer screen showing a database of gifts to other organizations]
Examples of what we CAN get

(Some) Board Connections
Provide a relationship map of someone in the room!*

*Make sure you ask them first!
Tell them the steps

- While prospect researchers and fundraisers seek out public information sources to find potential capacity of a prospect...
  - gifts to other organizations; real estate; company revenue; and, shareholdings, among other wealth indicators

- They also look to find affinity to an organization’s mission and programs
  - support of other “like” causes; event attendance, etc.

And....
Most importantly, prospect researchers and fundraisers seek out *linkages* to your organization

- Has the prospect served on a board with one of your directors or major giving donors?
- Do they live in the same neighbourhood?
- Are they business colleagues?
- Are they members of the same clubs and social circles?
- Did they attend the same school *at the same time* as one of your board members?

**BUT, linkages are the hardest to research!**
And then we tell them what they can do

1. Senior volunteers bring forward potential names to the organization.
   - In a group session: this is the best for open discussion.
     - Does more than one volunteer know the prospect?
     - What would be a good first step in solicitation?
   - One-on-one: some volunteers are more comfortable with this approach and this can work well with varied schedules.
   - On an ongoing basis: set up a process if volunteer has an idea for a prospect.
     - Give them a contact name/number/email
     - Put it in their contacts OR even give them a laminated business card with instructions of who to contact!
2. The organization brings forward a group of names for the senior volunteers to screen.

- In a group session: this is best for open discussion.
  - Does more than one volunteer know the prospect?
  - What would be a good first step in solicitation?
  - Sessions should run no longer than an hour and cover a limited number of names per session.

- Other questions asked include:
  - How well does a senior volunteer know the prospect?
  - Is the senior volunteer comfortable making a solicitation meeting with the prospect and/or introducing the prospect to the fund development team?
  - What are the affinity areas and estimated capacity of the prospect?
  - What is the likelihood or inclination this prospect would give to your organization?

- One-on-one: some volunteers are more comfortable with this approach and this can work well with schedules.
Include a break-out session

- In the Lunch & Learn, provide an example of how peer screening works - in practice
- Provide a Screening Sheet with some examples (of real prospects) already filled in and then let them try a few
  - Do a 10 minute break-out where groups of 3-4 volunteers discuss three names brought forward
  - Walk around and help them with questions
  - After the 10 minutes, bring everyone together and do a live fill-in of the Screening Sheet together (projected on overhead) as volunteers share what linkages they found.
  - Discussion ensues!
Case Sample: Land Trust

- Land Trust Board of Directors mostly filled with passionate regional environmentalists
- Had primarily foundations on their prospect list so they wanted to start there
- Didn’t think they had any affluent or influential connections

- **Geordie Dalglish, Chair**
  - Past Director, Georgian Bay Land Trust
  - Avid outdoorsman and environmentalist
  - $1M+ Royal Botanical Gardens
  - $300,000+ Georgian Bay Land Trust
  - $100,000+ Bruce Trail Conservancy
  - $50,000+ Canadian Canoe Museum
  - $25,000+ Nature Conservancy of Canada

It turned out **three** of the board members knew Geordie Dalglish well! They had sat on the Georgian Bay Land Trust Board with Geordie and had *no idea* that he sat on the W. Garfield Weston Foundation board *or* had any individual wealth (note, Geordie takes personal air transport to his cottage).
For regular peer screenings

- Remember the rule of KISS: Keep It Simple Stupid
  - Yes, I was raised by an English military mother
- Make peer screening a part of the board meetings quarterly
- But, each peer review session should be **no more than an hour**
  - So that means reviewing 10-30 names tops!
  - Ever see the look on someone’s face when you pass them a list of 200 names?!
- And, no one leaves the room with the names
  - These are confidential, we don’t want the lists sitting at home or at the office
  - You are reinstating the responsibility we all have to the organization
If you are bringing names forward think of the rule of thirds

For a positive successful session:

- 1/3 of the names should be warm
  - Lapsed donors who you want to get back on board or increase their giving
- 1/3 of the names you know have linkages to someone in the room
  - We know they know who they know but they don’t know they know them
  - Provide enough information that gives them a chance to make the connections “themselves”
  - Everyone needs to feel they have contributed to the success of the session
- 1/3 of the names are from your “wish list”
  - Prospects who look good on paper but have no known connections
Example of a Screening Sheet

You fill in these fields ahead of time

They fill in the rest
You want to define “know”

- Form: Know Well / Know Somewhat / Do Not Know
- Are they willing to ask on behalf of the organizations, make an introduction to a fundraiser, and/or pick up the phone?
- Based on past experience, “oh, I know him”!
  - Further define this to:
    - Close friend - do they holiday with each other?
    - Acquaintance - a friend of a friend or a member of the same club?
    - Business colleague - have worked with them in the same organization?
    - Business acquaintance - have crossed business circles?
Also: AFP Webbing Exercises
Also: AFP Webbing Exercises

Thank you for this information. It will be kept confidential.

AFP Fundamentals of Fundraising Course
© Association of Fundraising Professionals, 2010

Step two in the screening process is using the Prospect Screening Form to assign ask amount, areas of interest to use in approaching the prospect, and solicitors who will make this ask.
Tracking and Reporting Screening

Tracking senior volunteer screening and activities in the database provides reports for:

- Emphasizing the importance of volunteer relationships and actions
- Encouraging accountability and consistent feedback
- Helping staff manage volunteer relationships
- Directly relating volunteer activity with revenue generated for the organization!
Example of a board member screening report

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All information on this form is fictitious and is being used for demonstrative purposes.
Additional Sources

  - Available from: Amazon.com in US or Hilborn Civil Sector Press in Canada
  - All proceeds go to Apra Canada.
  - Chapter 5: Includes Senior Volunteers and Peer Screening: A Case Sample from Ivey School of Business by Sarah McCarthy
  - Chapter 12: Includes Peer Review Sample Forms and Reports

- **Don McDermott, Capacity Canada.** Association Governance Overview. AFP Golden Horseshoe, June 27, 2018.

- **Vernetta Walker, Engaging the Board of Directors to Meet Your Goals.** AFP Leadership Academy, October 13, 2018.
Good Luck and Have Fun!
Questions?

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