



## To Get Your Board Involved in Fundraising, Rephrase the Question

[ejewishphilanthropy.com/to-get-your-board-involved-in-fundraising-rephrase-the-question/](http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/to-get-your-board-involved-in-fundraising-rephrase-the-question/)

eJP

By Nanette Fridman, MPP, JD

Every board member is required to be involved with fundraising. This should be made explicitly clear before joining the board. Board members must make their own meaningful gift to the organization *and* help raise funds from other individuals, corporations and foundations as well.

Too often I hear from development directors and executive directors that so and so board member won't get involved in fundraising or that they are having trouble engaging the board in a particular campaign. In response, I suggest that the question to the board members be rephrased. It is not *if* the board will be involved in fundraising but *how* they would like to be involved.



Whatever the particular nonprofit's development strategy is – an annual campaign with or without a signature annual event, a capital and/or an endowment campaign – asking people to invest in your cause requires the same steps: prospecting, qualifying, cultivating, soliciting and stewarding. In recognition of this, some savvy organizations are moving toward integrated campaign approaches (more on that another time).

Without proper education, when board members hear fundraising they envision having to call a friend or someone they don't know and ask them for money. While it is true that solicitation is the actual act of asking for the funds, it is only *one* step in the development process. Board members are needed to help with each stage.

Board members who know a lot of people or like to research can help with prospecting and qualifying. Social and creative board members can work on cultivation plans and/or host cultivation events such as house parties or parlor meetings, breakfast meetings or cocktail parties.

Only those who are comfortable and properly trained should solicit. However, board members who are not comfortable asking for a donation may still help with this crucial step by setting the meeting and even accompanying the solicitor on the appointment. Once a donor has given, all board members should be willing to make thank you calls and be involved in appreciation and stewardship events and activities.

By educating your board about the development process and then asking how they want to be involved, you can engage your board in fundraising and strengthen your development efforts.

*Nanette Fridman, MPP, JD, is founder and principal of Fridman Strategies, a consulting firm specializing in strategic planning, financial resource development, governance and leadership coaching nonprofits. She is the author of "On Board: What Current and Aspiring Board Members Must Know About Nonprofits & Board Service." Nanette can be reached at [fridmanstrategies@gmail.com](mailto:fridmanstrategies@gmail.com).*