



*Strengthening Nonprofit
Governance & Management*

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I am being interviewed to serve on a board. What questions should I ask?

- What are the roles and expectations of board members?
- Is there a job description?
- What is the structure of the board? Committees?
- How would you like me to contribute to your process and conversations? Why did you choose me?
- When are meetings? What is the attendance policy?
- What are the five most critical decisions the board makes on an annual basis?
- Is the board satisfied with the CEO's performance? How did his last performance review go?
- How are board members trained/supported in meeting their obligation for fiscal oversight?
- What is the expectation for personal financial contributions of board members?
- How does the board handle conflict among members? Is a consent agenda used for board meetings?
- How do board members stay current in their knowledge related to the org mission?
- How will you know that I am a Very Good board member? And how will I know that I am a very good board member?
- How often will my performance be evaluated?
- Do you see any potential conflicts of interest given my roles elsewhere and my work in the community?
- When formal action is taken, do your votes tend to be unanimous? Or, are they often split votes?
- More pointed than the "why did you choose me?" -- "What, in particular, do you think I will add to the board and/or do for the organization?" i.e. "what do you really want from me?"
- Do they have a yearly retreat?
- How are board members removed...is there a term limit
- Does the Board have a self-assessment process? How frequently? Do you evaluate the effectiveness of each meeting? Is it shared with Directors? Do the Directors do a peer assessment of other old/new directors on some regular cycle? Does the Board have a board education policy? Does the Board meet in executive session without staff at the end of every

meeting? Does the Board have term limits for Directors and officers? Does the Board have a conflict of interest policy?

- Who's place would you be taking and why did they leave?
- What are the fundraising responsibilities?
- Is the board engaged....and describe how.
- Who's leading the Finance Committee and how sound are finances? Any Capital campaigns in the works or planned and what is expectation monetary and otherwise for Board member giving?
- How did the ED's last performance review go?
- What do you want to achieve in the next year, five years, and what do you want me (or think I can) contribute to your success?
- If this organization has a staff, what relationship would you have with the employees?