Step 1: **Identify** board needs (Skills, knowledge, perspective, connections, etc., needed to implement the strategic plan). What do we have? What is missing? Identify sources of board members with the needed characteristics.

Step 2: **Cultivate** potential board members. Get them interested in your organization and keep them informed of your progress.

Step 3: **Recruit** prospects. Describe why a prospective member is wanted and needed. Describe expectations and responsibilities of board members, and don’t minimize requirements. Invite questions, and elicit their interest and preparedness to serve.

Step 4: **Orient** new board members to the organization – program, history, bylaws, pressing issues, finances, facilities, organization chart – and to the board – recent minutes, committees, board member responsibilities, lists of board members and key staff members.

Step 5: **Activate/Engage** all board members. Discover their interests and availability. Involve them in committees or task forces. Assign them a board “buddy.” Solicit feedback. Hold everyone accountable. Express appreciation for work well done.

Step 6: **Educate** the board. Provide information concerning your mission area. Promote exploration of issues facing the organization. Don’t hide difficulties. Celebrate accomplishments.

Step 7: **Evaluate** the board and individual board members. Engage the board in assessing its own performance. Identify ways in which to improve. Encourage individual self-assessment.

Step 8: **Rotate** board members. Consider using term limits. Do not automatically re-elect for an additional term; consider the board’s needs and the board member’s performance. Explore the possibility of advising members who are not active to resign. Develop new leadership.

Step 9: **Celebrate!** Recognize victories and progress, even small ones. Appreciate individual contributions to the board, the organization, and the community. Make room for humor and a good laugh.


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