



Questions to Ask Before Joining a Board

Consider asking these questions as you are researching the organization and determining if this board is a good fit for you:

Programs and Mission

- What is the organization's mission?
- How do its current programs relate to the mission?
- Can I visit the organization to observe programs/activities firsthand?
- Does the organization have a strategic plan that is reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis?

Clients or Constituencies

- Whom does the organization serve?
- Are the organization's clients or constituencies satisfied with the organization?
- What might clients or constituencies say the organization needs to do more of, or be better at?

Finances

- What are the organization's financial challenges?
- Does the board discuss and approve the annual budget?
- How often do board members receive financial reports?

Board Structure

- How is the board structured?
- Are there descriptions of board committee functions and responsibilities?
- Who is currently on the board?
- Is there a system of checks and balances to prevent conflicts of interest between board members and the organization?
- Does the organization have directors and officers liability coverage?

Board Member Responsibilities

- What are the ways I can contribute as a board member?
- How much of my time will be required for meetings and special events?
- Tell me about your committees, and how board members are assigned.
- What orientation will I receive to the organization and to the responsibilities of board service?
- Does the organization provide opportunities for board development and education?
- What is the board's role in fundraising?
- Will I be expected to make a specific annual financial contribution? Will my company?

Board/Staff Relationship

- Is the board satisfied with the performance of the executive staff?
- How do board members and senior staff typically work with each other?