

Joining a Nonprofit Board of Directors: An Overview

An Overview for Donors

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
1. Why should I consider serving as a board member of a nonprofit organization?	2
2. How are nonprofit boards different from corporate boards of directors?	3
3. Are there different kinds of nonprofit boards?	4
4. What are the responsibilities of a nonprofit board member?	5
5. How do I find the right nonprofit board opportunity?	6
6. What questions should I ask myself before I agree to be on a board of directors?	7
7. What questions should I ask the organization before I agree to be on their board of directors?	8
Conclusion	9
Recommended Resources	10

Acknowledgement

The Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund acknowledges the author of this article, Melinda T. Tuan, an independent philanthropic consultant.

Joining a Nonprofit Board of Directors: An Overview

“If you want to make an impact on the world, you need to understand the organizations that are leading the change. Board participation gives you a window into the work of social change and a way to meet lifelong friends who share your philanthropic purpose and values.”

– Aaron Hurst, board member
BoardSource

Introduction

Imagine you are going to make a major financial gift to a nonprofit organization and how you might identify, evaluate, and select an organization that can generate the most impact from your investment¹. Prior to making this kind of donation, most donors would perform a fair amount of due diligence on the organization and the proposed project. The approach you take to joining a board of directors should be even more rigorous. When you join a board, in addition to making financial contributions, you are assuming legal responsibilities for the organization and committing to make a significant donation of your time, talent and heart.

Research indicates that approximately 2 million board seats² need to be filled on an annual basis in the United States. Over three fourths of nonprofit organizations find it difficult to recruit board members³; at the same time, a recent survey found that over three-fourths of working professionals would like to join a nonprofit board of directors⁴. Clearly, there is an opportunity to connect those who want to serve on a nonprofit board of directors with the organizations that need committed, talented board members. Yet there is little information available to individuals that highlights how to join a nonprofit board of directors for the first time.

The purpose of this overview is to assist individuals with the process behind identifying and ultimately joining the board of a nonprofit organization. This publication addresses seven key questions related to evaluating a role in nonprofit board leadership:

- 1. Why should I consider serving as a board member of a nonprofit organization?**
- 2. How are nonprofit boards different from corporate boards of directors?**
- 3. Are there different kinds of nonprofit boards?**
- 4. What are the responsibilities of a nonprofit board member?**
- 5. How do I find the right nonprofit board opportunity?**
- 6. What questions should I ask myself before I agree to be on a board of directors?**
- 7. What questions should I ask the organization before I agree to be on their board of directors?**

While these questions and accompanying answers are targeted at the first-time board member, they can also be useful and valuable to revisit as you consider existing and future board service opportunities.

¹ See the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund publication “Finding and Funding Effective Nonprofit Organizations: An Overview for Donors” for more details.

² Note: The most recent study conducted on open board seats in the nonprofit sectors was conducted in 2002. Booz Allen Hamilton. “Board Recruitment in the Nonprofit Market: Summary of Key Findings.” Presentation. May 2002. New York, NY.

³ The 2012 BoardSource Nonprofit Governance Index is a comprehensive study of governance practices based on a respondent pool of 1,341 chief executives.

⁴ Taproot Foundation Research, 2011.

1. Why should I consider serving as a board member of a nonprofit organization?

“In joining a nonprofit board of directors, you contribute your time, energy, and skills and get to be part of something larger in your community and give something back. You can feel good about what you do, learn about new areas, meet interesting people, and join a new community.”

– Robin Krause, Partner
Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler LLP

Over the past two decades, the nonprofit sector has grown significantly. There are now nearly 1.6 million nonprofit organizations in the United States and a majority of these organizations are required to have boards of directors to govern their work and represent the public’s interest in ensuring the financial contributions to the organization are used wisely⁵. With over 2 million vacancies, nonprofit organizations throughout the country are in desperate need of board members. Aaron Hurst, a board member of BoardSource, a board governance nonprofit and a leading expert on nonprofit board service, urges qualified individuals to consider meeting this critical need saying: “There’s a real need for governance in this country. One of the best ways Americans can help with social change in society is to fill these board seats and fill them with courage.”

Experts point to the many benefits that accrue to individual board members in the course of serving, including opportunities to:

- Build your professional network
- Make personal connections with others who share your values and passions
- Develop new skills
- Learn about a new issue area or constituency
- Broaden your exposure to a new community
- Rekindle a previous passion or interest

Certainly, you can benefit in these ways by simply volunteering with a nonprofit organization, but serving on a board of directors also allows you to watch over

your financial investment in an organization in a deeper way and perhaps with greater impact.

While there are many benefits associated with board service, being a member of a nonprofit board of directors can also present a number of challenges and occasional disappointments. For example, an organization may not decide to go in the strategic direction an individual board member believes it should; or there can be professional disagreements and/or personality conflicts on the board or between board and staff. And there are circumstances when nonprofit board members may find themselves overseeing an organization in a crisis due to an unexpected leadership change or downturn in the economy.

Ideally, individuals join boards because they are passionate about the mission of the organization, and are committed to helping the organization reach that mission despite the sometimes significant bumps along the way. Krause notes that all nonprofit organizations need skilled volunteers. But, she adds, they “especially need smart and committed people who are willing to take their board roles seriously to oversee the activities of the organization and get their mission out to the world.”

⁵ nccs.urban.org/statistics/quickfacts.cfm.

2. How are nonprofit boards different from corporate boards of directors?

“The governance of nonprofits can differ dramatically from the governance of businesses. Even the best intentions can prove disastrous when new board members fail to understand that their traditional business experience can carry them only so far.”

– F. Warren McFarlan
 “Working on Nonprofit Boards:
 Don’t Assume the Shoe Fits”⁶

On the surface, there are similarities between the role of the board of directors in the nonprofit and corporate sectors. For example, in both cases the boards are responsible for setting the organization’s mission, recruiting and evaluating top management, and monitoring the organization’s progress toward achieving its mission. However, according to experts on nonprofit boards, there are a number of critical areas where nonprofit governance is different from for-profit governance. For example:

- **Mission and Measurement:** In their book *Joining a Nonprofit Board*, the authors Epstein and McFarlan write: “In the for-profit world, an economist would argue that the main objective and mission of an organization is through the provision of goods and services to earn an appropriate return on invested capital for its shareholders.”⁷ In contrast, McFarlan notes: “for the nonprofit organization, financial considerations form only one dimension of its mission statement.”⁸
- **CEO authority:** McFarlan notes that “a for-profit CEO is given relatively free reign to set and implement strategy, which is then reviewed by the board of directors.” The reason for this, he explains, is that in the United States most corporate CEOs are also the board chair. In contrast, in the nonprofit world “it’s completely normal for a CEO to report to a nonexecutive chair. Indeed, managing this extraordinarily

important and sensitive relationship over a long period of time is the greatest leadership challenge a nonprofit CEO faces.”⁹

- **Board composition:** Experts note that nonprofit boards tend to be larger and composed of more heterogeneous members than for-profit boards.¹⁰ Whereas for-profit boards “generally keep board numbers to between eight and 14 directors, chiefly to stimulate candid debate,”¹¹ nonprofit boards must fundraise and represent their many constituencies (e.g. clients, program beneficiaries, donors, the government), which “can lead to very large boards of 25 to 30, or even as many as...130 members...”¹²
- **Compensation for board service:** Epstein and McFarlan observe that “the motivations of the nonprofit board members and their responsibilities could not be more different from those of their for-profit brethren.” For-profit board members are compensated well for their service: receiving retainers, board meeting attendance fees, and sometimes stock in the company. Nonprofit board members, instead of receiving remuneration, are typically expected to donate money to the organization.¹³

It is especially important for individuals with previous experience serving on for-profit boards to understand these similarities and differences in order to effectively participate as a nonprofit board member.

⁶ McFarlan, F. Warren. “Working on Nonprofit Boards: Don’t Assume the Shoe Fits.” Harvard Business Review. November-December, 1999.

⁷ Epstein, Marc J. and F. Warren McFarlan. *Joining a Nonprofit Board: What You Need To Know*. Introduction. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 2011. P.6.

⁸ McFarlan. p.4.

⁹ McFarlan. p.6.

¹⁰ Epstein and McFarlan. p.17.

¹¹ McFarlan. p.7.

¹² Epstein and McFarlan. p.17.

¹³ According to the BoardSource Nonprofit Governance Index 2012, only 3% of nonprofits pay board members an honorarium for their service. p. 10.

3. Are there different kinds of nonprofit boards?

“Just as nonprofits pass through identifiable organizational stages, so do nonprofit boards. Three very different and quite distinct types of boards gradually and often quite belatedly develop as nonprofit organizations grow and change. The first of these is the organizing board, the second is the governing board, and the third is the institutional board.”

– Karl Mathiasen, III
“Board Passages”¹⁴

The nonprofit sector is incredibly diverse. Nonprofits can differ by their mission and purpose, size of budget and staff, use of facilities, geography, program complexity, main sources of revenues, and primary constituency. All of these factors affect how a board of directors operates and how individual board members fulfill their responsibilities.

However, experts such as William Ryan, a governance writer and consultant, believe the experience of a nonprofit board member is defined more by the lifecycle stage of an organization than the specifics of the organization’s mission and programs. For example, a board member’s activities and role at a start-up arts organization will be more similar to that of a board member at a start-up animal welfare nonprofit than a 100 year-old, mature arts organization. The experts posit the most helpful way of understanding the different types of boards is to look at where the organization is in its lifecycle.

The lifecycle stages of nonprofit organizations can be broadly grouped as follows: 1) start-up, 2) growth stage, 3) mature. The characteristics and responsibilities of the board of directors associated with each stage of organizational development are as follows:

- 1. Start-up organization/organizing board** – The board tends to be small and usually homogenous; the founding entrepreneur moves fast; the board serves as a sounding board for the founder; board members take on the tasks necessary to run the organization in the absence of paid, professional staff.

- 2. Growth organization/governing board** – The board becomes larger and hopefully more diverse; more processes and procedures need to be established to clarify power and authority sharing between board and staff; board sub-committees become more important to effective board functioning.

- 3. Mature organization/institutional board** – The board tends to be large and diverse; decision-making is more deliberate; the board makes high-level decisions as a collective body and is increasingly focused on fundraising; there may not be as many volunteer obligations given the professional and increasingly sophisticated staff available to carry out the organization’s mission.

In general, organizations move through these three lifecycle stages and the boards’ responsibilities evolve and progress as well, although some organizations may never progress to the third stage. Additionally, as Loretta Gallegos, Associate Director, Experiential Learning, Center for Social Innovation at the Stanford Graduate School of Business states, “the challenge is that frequently organizations are in some combination of these stages...and it’s important to be clear on this dynamic.”

Given these different types of expectations of nonprofit board members, experts recommend you consider whether to join a board based on the life stage of the organization in question. As the board member responsibilities vary greatly across life stages, it is important to evaluate the fit between your interests and abilities to meet the needs of the organization at that time.

¹⁴ Mathiasen, Karl III. “Board Passages: Three Key Stages in a Nonprofit Board’s Life Cycle.” National Center for Nonprofit Boards. 1999. Sixth printing, March 2000.

4. What are the responsibilities of a nonprofit board member?

“At a fundamental level, you have three primary obligations as a board member: to act in the best interest of the charity, to respect your duty of loyalty by putting the interests of the charity ahead of your own, and to ensure that the mission of the charity is carried out.”

– Robin Krause, Partner
Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler LLP

According to BoardSource, there are three fundamental legal responsibilities of a nonprofit board member¹⁵:

1. **Duty of Care** – A board member owes the duty to exercise reasonable care when s/he makes a decision as a steward of the organization
2. **Duty of Loyalty** – A board member can never use information obtained as a member for personal gain, but must act in the best interest of the organization
3. **Duty of Obedience** – A board member must be faithful to the organization’s mission and not act in a way that is inconsistent with the central goals of the organization

Beyond these legal responsibilities, there are practical day-to-day responsibilities individual board members should be prepared to fulfill. These include the following activities¹⁶:

- Attend all board and committee meetings and functions, such as special events
- Be informed about the organization's mission, services, policies, and programs
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings
- Serve on committees or task forces and offer to take on special assignments

- Make a personal financial contribution to the organization¹⁷
- Inform others about the organization
- Suggest possible nominees to the board who can make significant contributions to the work of the board and the organization
- Keep up-to-date on developments in the organization's field
- Follow conflict-of-interest and confidentiality policies
- Refrain from making special requests of the staff
- Assist the board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, such as reviewing the organization's annual financial statements

Another way to think about the responsibilities of individual board members can be captured in the triple letter acronyms known as the 3Ts and 3Ws. The three Ts refer to: time, treasure, and talent; and the 3Ws: wisdom, wealth, and work. As you consider the 3Ts or 3Ws you have to offer at this point in time, it is helpful to consider what kind of organization you are interested in serving. The following section addresses how you might find the right nonprofit board opportunity.

¹⁵ Bruce R. Hopkins, Legal Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards (BoardSource 2003).

¹⁶ BoardSource. “What are the Responsibilities of Individual Board Members.” 2010.

¹⁷ According to a BoardSource survey, 68 percent of nonprofit organizations have a policy requiring board members to make a personal contribution on an annual basis and boards, on average, have 74 percent participation in giving. BoardSource. www.bridgespan.org. “Board Members and Personal Contributions.” <http://bit.ly/1Vuy04t>.

5. How do I find the right nonprofit board opportunity?

“If you’re seriously considering joining a nonprofit board...it’s a good idea to make sure that your passions and unique abilities are a good match with the organization’s mission and needs.”

– The Bridgespan Group
 “The Match Game: Ensuring Fit—and Effectiveness—as a Nonprofit Board Member”¹⁸

Similar to insights offered in other publications of the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund concerning how to get started with your philanthropy¹⁹, clarifying your values and passions and interests are of foremost importance in identifying an organization you might want to volunteer with in a board role. Jan Masaoka, CEO at California Association of Nonprofits and Director and Editor-in-Chief of Blue Avocado, a nonprofit online magazine for community nonprofits, suggests five strategies for finding the right board opportunity²⁰:

- 1. Ask your friends and fellow board members**
 – Ask about the boards they serve on and obtain information from them about possible board service opportunities.
- 2. Ask about board opportunities where you already volunteer** – The best board opportunity may be with an organization where you are already volunteering or an organization for which you have a passion and that you are already funding.
- 3. Look online** – There are a variety of online resources to help facilitate board matching including three national sites:
www.boardnetUSA.org, www.bridgespan.org, and LinkedIn. (See the Recommended Resources section for more information).
- 4. Post your availability on your Facebook page** – Ask your social network to help connect you to the right board opportunity.

5. Ask other board members and the executive director of the organization where you're already on the board

– If you are already serving on a board, the other board members and executive director may be well-networked and, assuming you have been an effective board member, be willing to help you connect with another organization.

As discussed earlier, the requirements of boards of directors differ depending on the lifecycle of the organization. Thus, finding the right board service opportunity depends on identifying what types of work gives you the most satisfaction and matching that up with an organization that is working on an issue about which you are passionate and that is at the right life stage. Hurst observes that “Some people really like helping with a turnaround, some like steady state and incremental growth organizations. Others like the early start-up phase. These challenges make a huge difference on the board member experience.” In fact, Hurst believes that finding the right match between the needs of an organization and an individual board member’s interest and ability to help an organization at that particular life stage has the largest impact on board member satisfaction.

Once you’ve identified an organization for which you’d like to serve as a board member, contact the board chair or executive director to indicate your interest in exploring board service. They may ask you to serve first as a volunteer in one of their program areas or maybe serve on a board committee in order to test your commitment and mutually determine if board service might be a good fit.

¹⁸ The Bridgespan Group. www.bridgespan.org. “The Match Game: Ensuring Fit—and Effectiveness—as a Nonprofit Board Member.” <http://bit.ly/1TAa3sz>

¹⁹ Tuan, Melinda. “Getting Started with Your Philanthropy: An Overview for Donors.” Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund.

²⁰ Masaoka, Jan. “Finding the Right Next Board to Join.” <http://www.blueavocado.org/node/604>. December 28, 2010.

6. What questions should I ask myself before I agree to be on a board of directors?

“The biggest obstacle for individuals joining a nonprofit board of directors is failing to ask the right questions to help them find a good fit.”

– Angela Seaworth, Director
Rice Center for Philanthropy
and Nonprofit Leadership

Once you’ve identified a specific nonprofit board service opportunity, experts recommend you ask yourself a series of questions before agreeing to join the board. These questions fall into the following categories:

- **Passion for the organization’s mission** – Krause suggests asking yourself: “Is this an area I am personally and professionally interested in? Will I prioritize my work with this particular organization?” Susan Wolf Ditkoff, a partner at the Bridgespan Group, a nonprofit advisor and resource for mission-driven organizations and philanthropists, recommends that you align your investment of time and energy with the causes you care about most.
- **Shared goals and expectations** – Is your goal for joining the board primarily altruistic or do you want to learn a new skill or expand your knowledge of a certain issue area or sector? Are your goals synergistic with the organization’s expectations for your involvement? If an organization approaches you about joining their board, Seaworth recommends you ask the organizational leaders to explain specifically why you would add value to their board. “Does the organization want your money, time or maybe access to your family name? Do they want to benefit from your expertise, your connections, or gain access to your grandfather?” It is helpful to anticipate what the organization might want from you and evaluate whether that fits with your goals for joining the board.
- **Readiness to commit** – Are you prepared to commit the time, treasure and talent (or wisdom, wealth and work) needed to increase the impact of the organization at this particular stage of your life and the organization’s lifecycle? Masaoka

encourages individuals to ask themselves: “What can I and what will I contribute to this organization?” She says it is also useful to ask: “What am I not willing to contribute to the organization?”²¹ It is very important to consider whether what you have to offer is a good match with what the organization needs. Gallegos observes, “One of the biggest challenges is that people get involved in an organization because they are passionate about the mission but their time and talents and what the organization needs may not be a match.”

- **Compatible work styles** – Hurst recommends asking questions such as “Does the organizational culture ‘fit’ with how I like to work?”, “Does the organization work at a pace that is consistent with my natural pace?” and “Can I envision myself working well with the CEO and the other board members?”
- **Clear measures of success** – Masaoka advises individuals to clearly delineate how they will measure the success of their board service. You should state what you want to accomplish, learn, and do before completing your term of board service.

As you carefully contemplate and answer these questions for yourself, you should also ask a lot of questions of the nonprofit organization before making your decision about joining a nonprofit board of directors.

²¹ “Questions to Ask Yourself before Joining Your Next Board.” From Best of the Board Café (a column in the online magazine Blue Avocado), 2003 and 2009. CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, published by Fieldstone Alliance. P.162.

7. What questions should I ask the organization before I agree to be on their board of directors?

“Do your research before you join a board of directors. It’s one thing to do research before you write a check, but to become a trustee or director, you should really understand what you’re getting yourself into....Being invited is an honor and an awesome responsibility; understanding all the complexities of an organization before joining is critical.”

– Eric Kessler,
Founder and Managing Director
Arabella Advisors

Vernetta Walker, Chief Governance Officer and Vice President of Programs at BoardSource suggests individuals approach joining a nonprofit board of directors similar to interviewing for a job. In fact, she recommends you ask for the board member job description as one of the first steps in considering a board position. In addition, BoardSource recommends prospective board members ask questions across the following six categories as part of the due diligence process²²:

1. **The organization’s programs** – What is the mission, how do programs relate to the mission, is there a strategic plan, can I visit a program?
2. **The organization’s financial status** – Is the financial condition sound, does the board discuss and approve the annual budget, how often do board members receive financial reports?
3. **The organization’s clients or constituencies** – Whom does the organization serve, are they satisfied with the organization?
4. **The structure of the board of directors** – How is the board structured, are there job descriptions, committee descriptions, who are the other board members, are there checks and balances to prevent conflicts of interest, does the organization have directors and officers liability coverage?
5. **The individual board members’ responsibilities** – How do you see me contributing as a board member, how much of

my time will be required, how are committee assignments made, what orientation will I receive, are there opportunities for board development and education, what is the board’s role in fundraising, will I be expected to make an annual financial contribution, what role will I play in soliciting donors?

6. **The board’s relationship to the staff** – Is the board satisfied with the performance of the executive staff, how do board members and senior staff typically work with each other?

In addition to asking these questions, it is important to obtain and review selected background information about the organization including the annual report, most recent audited financial statement, long-range program and financial plan, a list of current board members with titles and affiliations, a description of board members’ responsibilities, a board organization chart, a staff organization chart, the organization’s newsletter, brochure and other publications; media about the organization, and a biography of the chief executive.²³

Beyond these due diligence questions and data gathering activities, experts reiterate the importance of ascertaining what roles and responsibilities the organization expects of you and how well those fit with your own abilities and interests. Kessler described the optimal board recruitment scenario as follows: “Ideally, when asked to join a board of directors, you will be given a sheet that lays out the board member responsibilities, how many meetings there are each year, how much money you are expected to give or raise, and their expectations about how you will uniquely contribute to the success of the organization.”

²² BoardSource. “What Should I Know Before Joining a Nonprofit Board?” 2010.

²³ Ibid.

Conclusion

“At the end of the day, there are only so many boards and causes that can be your number one or number two priority...So align what you care about most with your greatest investment of time, energy and resources in serving on the board of directors.”

– Susan Wolf Ditkoff, Partner
The Bridgespan Group

Serving on a nonprofit board of directors can be a tremendously rewarding and fulfilling experience. We believe individuals should approach nonprofit board service with the same level of due diligence, seriousness and commitment as for a job search. It is important to find the right organization and board opportunity that fits with your goals, abilities and availability. Hurst captures this sentiment well, saying: “You can have a deep relationship with a nonprofit organization without being on the board of directors. Make sure being on the board is the job you want.”

This publication has been designed to help you contemplate how and whether to join a nonprofit board of directors. A list of recommended resources for each of the seven questions is included at the end of this publication to help you explore each of these issues more deeply. For more information on this topic or additional assistance with philanthropic topics, contact your Goldman Sachs Private Wealth Advisor.

Recommended Resources

1. **Why should I consider serving as a board member of a nonprofit organization?**
 - BoardSource. “Serve on a Nonprofit Board.” www.boardsource.org. <http://bit.ly/25OvPhb>.
 - Epstein, Marc J. and F. Warren McFarlan. *Joining a Nonprofit Board: What You Need To Know*. Chapter 8: You as a Trustee. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 2011. pp. 165 – 172, 179.
2. **How are nonprofit boards different from corporate boards of directors?**
 - Epstein, Marc J. and F. Warren McFarlan. *Joining a Nonprofit Board: What You Need To Know*. Introduction. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 2011. pp. 2 - 23.
 - McFarlan, Warren F. “Working on Nonprofit Boards: Don’t Assume the Shoe Fits.” *Harvard Business Review*. November 1, 1999.
 - The Bridgespan Group. www.bridgespan.org. “How to Find the Right Nonprofit? John Whitehead Says to Pick a Field You Care About.” <http://bit.ly/1RZZcZJ> – In this video, John Whitehead, Former Co-Chairman, Goldman Sachs, & Company; Former Deputy Secretary of State briefly discusses how to find the right nonprofit to work with whether as a volunteer or board member.
 - The Bridgespan Group. www.bridgespan.org. “What’s Your Mission? John Whitehead Recommends This Trick for Getting Your Board on Board.” <http://bit.ly/1MQNu1j> – In this video, John Whitehead, Former Co-Chairman, Goldman Sachs, & Company; Former Deputy Secretary of State briefly discusses the differences between for-profit and nonprofit boards of directors and the importance of articulating the mission of the nonprofit organization.
3. **Are there different kinds of nonprofit boards?**
 - Mathiasen, Karl III. “Board Passages: Three Key Stages in a Nonprofit Board’s Life Cycle.” *National Center for Nonprofit Boards*. 1990.
4. **What are the responsibilities of a nonprofit board member?**
 - BoardSource. “What are the Responsibilities of Individual Board Members?” www.bridgespan.org. <http://bit.ly/1RTIiGO>.
 - BoardSource. “What are the Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards?” www.bridgespan.org. <http://bit.ly/22qPodp>.
 - BoardSource. “What are the Legal Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards?” www.bridgespan.org. <http://bit.ly/1TFdXk7>.
 - BoardSource. *The Nonprofit Board Answer Book: A Practice Guide for Board Members and Chief Executives*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 2012.
5. **How do I find the right nonprofit board opportunity?**
 - The Bridgespan Group. “Nonprofit Boards: How to Find a Rewarding Board Position.” www.bridgespan.org. <http://bit.ly/1SDV3oF>.
 - The Bridgespan Group. “The Match Game: Ensuring Fit—and Effectiveness—as a Nonprofit Board Member.” www.bridgespan.org. <http://bit.ly/1TAa3sz>.
 - Masaoka, Jan. “Finding the Right Next Board to Join.” <http://www.blueavocado.org/node/604>. December 28, 2010.

Board matching resources

The following are national board matching resources. In addition, there are locally-based, locally-serving board matching services in most major cities across the country.

- www.boardnetusa.org – A website that facilitates individuals' efforts to find a board service opportunity and helps nonprofits find board members.
- http://www.bridgespan.org/Nonprofit_Jobs/Search_Jobs.aspx – Bridgespan is a nonprofit advisor and resource for mission-driven organizations and philanthropists. A limited number of board of director positions can be found by selecting "board" as the position type on the nonprofit job board page.
- www.HandsOnNetwork.org – A nonprofit organization whose website has links to local volunteer action centers where there may be listings of organizations looking for board members.
- www.nonprofit.linkedin.com – LinkedIn is a popular way in which nonprofits recruit board members. LinkedIn members can self-identify as interested in volunteering or serving on a nonprofit board of director and nonprofits that have profiles on LinkedIn can search for individuals with the particular volunteer profile they need.
- www.volunteermatch.org – A nonprofit organization whose website provides listings of board service opportunities. Type "board" in the search box to find organizations looking for board members in your area.

6. What questions should I ask myself before I agree to be on a board of directors?

- The Bridgespan Group. "Nonprofit Boards: How to Find a Rewarding Board Position." www.bridgespan.org. <http://bit.ly/1SDV3oF>.
- Banjo, Shelly. "Before You Join that Board..." The Wall Street Journal. November 28, 2011.
- Masaoka, Jan. "Finding the Right Next Board to Join." <http://www.blueavocado.org/node/604>. December 28, 2010. (www.blueavocado.org).

7. What questions should I ask the organization before I agree to be on a board of directors?

- BoardSource. "What Should I Know Before Joining the Board?" www.bridgespan.org. <http://bit.ly/1RTIOVt>.
- The Bridgespan Group. "Quick Guide to Interviewing a Nonprofit Board Member." www.bridgespan.org. <http://bit.ly/1SOLnar>.
- The Bridgespan Group. "How to Research a Nonprofit's Leadership—Deep Dive Approach." www.bridgespan.org. <http://bit.ly/1qyvOhw>.

Legal Disclosures

This material is intended for informational purposes only. While it is based on information believed to be reliable, no warranty is given as to its accuracy or completeness. Concepts expressed are current as of the date appearing in this material only and are subject to change without notice. No part of this material may be i) copied, photocopied or duplicated in any form, by any means, or ii) redistributed without Goldman, Sachs & Co.'s and the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund's prior written consent.

Contributions made to the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund are irrevocable. Assets contributed to the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund and invested in the investment options are owned and controlled by the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund, and are not part of a client's portfolio assets held at Goldman, Sachs & Co.

In addition, subject to applicable law, you (and your employees, representatives and other agents) may disclose any and all aspects of any potential transaction or structure described herein that are necessary to support any US federal income tax benefits, and all materials of any kind (including tax opinions and other tax analyses) related thereto, without the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund and/or Goldman, Sachs & Co. imposing any limitation of any kind.

Please see the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund Program Circular for more details on the fees and expenses associated with each separate Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund account.

The website links and reference materials provided are for your convenience only and are not an endorsement or recommendation by Goldman Sachs of any of these websites or the products or services offered. Goldman Sachs is not responsible for the accuracy and validity of the content of these websites.

Information and opinions expressed by individuals other than Goldman Sachs employees do not necessarily reflect the view of Goldman Sachs. Information and opinions are as of the date of this material only and are subject to change without notice.

© 2016 Goldman, Sachs & Co. and the Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund. All rights reserved.