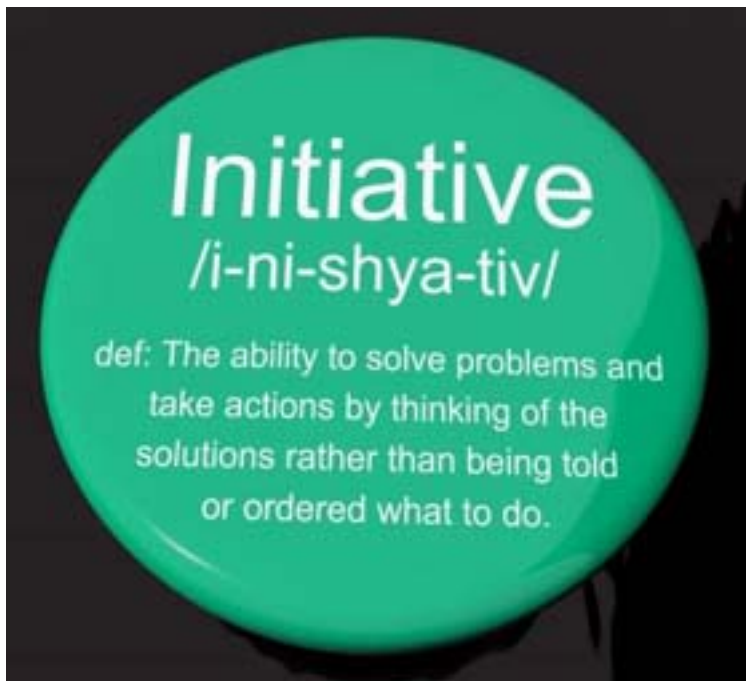


FUNdraising Good Times: Six things you can do as a board member

Written by Mel and Pearl Shaw
Tuesday, 01 April 2014 11:58



Calling all nonprofit board members: Do you sometimes wonder what value you bring to the nonprofits you serve? Do you wish you were more engaged, or that "they" took more advantage of the talents you bring to the board? We have the solution for you: take initiative! Don't wait for someone to ask you to get involved.

Here are six things you can do between now and the next board meeting to energize yourself and your fellow board members. Choose one or more that sounds like fun to you. Each can help engage new supporters, increase awareness and raise money. These tips work if you are involved with university, a grassroots organization, or any size nonprofit in-between.

First, write a thank you note or personally call a donor to thank them for their gift. Allocate five minutes for the conversation. Ask what encouraged them to give and what attracts them to your organization. Listen. Respond to any questions they may have. Thank them again.

Second, invite a potential supporter to visit the organization's facilities and observe its programs. Agree on a date and time to meet at the nonprofit and tour together. Request that a staff member join you – one who can share information and answer questions.

Third, visit staff members to get to know them and ask "what can I do to help?" Follow through on what you learn.

Fourth, have lunch with a fellow board member to discuss how the two of you can work together to increase awareness or raise funds. Hatch a plan that can be implemented without staff involvement. Follow through on your ideas.

Fifth, make arrangements to speak before a local organization to share information about your nonprofit. It could be your church, the rotary, or your book club. Keep your comments brief and engaging.

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Sixth, host a small fundraising event. Invite a few close friends and associates to your home or office for coffee or an evening glass of wine. Spend five minutes sharing information about the nonprofit you serve and ask each guest to make a gift equal to or greater than your gift.

Before implementing these suggestions, take a moment to identify the three things you want to communicate about why you give your time and talent to serve on the board. Share these in conversation or through your presentation. Let people know you are accessible if they have questions in the future, or if they want to get involved. Share your contact information. Bring a simple brochure to share.

Anyone of these activities will extend the reach of your nonprofit. They will energize you. You will have something new to report at the next board meeting. Don't wait for someone to "assign" you to a task. Jump in!

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Mel and Pearl Shaw position nonprofits, colleges and universities for fundraising success. For help with your campaign visit www.saadandshaw.com or call (901) 522-8727.