

Just One of Tom Little's BIG Ideas



Recruiting Board Members

*The pay is bad, but other personal benefits are good.
Focus on the positive.*

Non-profit Board members are hard to find. There is no pay, and we ask them to devote hours of their time every month to fulfill the duties of the position.

Our usual sales pitch is: "You will be contributing to the community". Which is right. But once you scratch the surface, there is much more to it than that.

The truth is that Board members have lots to gain personally from joining a non-profit Board. So set aside the time-worn justification of "contributing to the community", and explain all the other ways they will benefit. Here are fourteen that have been put forth by Board members I have provided training to over the past year:

- Learning about non-profits and the people they serve
- Fun (Board meetings and events aren't all strictly business)
- Connection to a great organization
- Applying their own skills and expertise (e.g. finance)
- Chance to socialize
- New business contacts and new friends
- Manageable time commitment
- Personal satisfaction
- Food (some Boards make meetings an occasion by bringing something special to share)
- Preservation/enhancement of language, culture & religion
- Credentials, resume building and fulfilling professional development requirements
- Opportunity to exercise leadership within the organization and beyond the organization
- Contributing to the welfare of the people supported by the organization if a human service provider
- Contributing to the further improvement and development of the organization
- Opportunity to scope out the organization/get to know it better (important if the board member also uses its services or may use them at a future date - e.g. childcare facilities, seniors residences)

When you recruit, sell, don't beg. You will actually be doing your candidates a favour. In fact, with all these benefits, maybe we should be charging people to be Board members. A new revenue stream ... fantastic!

About Tom Little & His Big Ideas

Tom Little started out as small as his name. Even smaller maybe.

Over time though, Tom Little got big. Six foot four. Two hundred and fifteen pounds ... maybe two twenty ...two twenty-five absolute tops, but only when his love of butter and orange juice starts creeping towards addiction.

So when Tom Little has an idea, it's automatically a BIG idea. But that's not the only reason.

Tom has spent his career working for, and with, non-profit organizations. That exposure, first as an executive director and then as a purveyor of non-profit knowledge (you might use the term "consultant"), has given him many insights into how these strange and wonderful creations operate.

Along the way his colleague Nancy Mouldsdale joined the fray, bringing acuity and youthful enthusiasm to complement Tom's years (Nancy describes them as many, many years) of experience.

Tom Little's BIG Ideas are intended to help you make your non-profit better. Primarily focused on management and Boards, they appeal to anyone involved in the non-profit sector.

You get full access to Tom's BIG Ideas when you call on him for assistance in planning, evaluation, research and training.

Non-profit organizations are built on ideas. The better the ideas, the better the organization. Tom provides you with the best ideas available!

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