Strategies to Engage Your Board in Fundraising

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10 Make a meaningful gift first

Why it works: Sets an example and builds credibility

How:

- Any personally meaningful amount matters.
- Encourage board-wide participation (100% giving goal).
- Optionally give anonymously if that reduces pressure.

9 Write personal thank you notes

Why it works: Gratitude deepens donor relationships

How:

- Handwrite or email thank-you messages to donors after a campaign or donation.
- Add personal touches that show appreciation and that you ‘know’ the donor’s behavior.
- Thank lapsed donors for past support—no ask, just reconnection.

8 Make ‘thank you’ phone calls

Why it works: Quick and meaningful

How:

- 3-minute calls just to say thanks—no ask included.
- Great for year-end or after events.
- Make sure board introduces themselves as ‘volunteer board member.’
- Provide script for ease of calling.

7 Hand address letters or event invitations

Why it works: Get noticed and increase engagement

How:

- Handwrite names and addresses on envelopes—makes mail feel special.
- Use for appeals, event invites, or stewardship notes.
- Staff can provide materials, addresses, and samples to make it easy.
- Bonus: Do it together at a board meeting or “stuffing party” for fun!

6 Use ‘Tables and Tees’ strategically

Why it works: Leverages board members’ networks in a social, low-pressure way

How:

- Ask board members to host a table at your fundraising event or luncheon.
- Provide them with talking points and invitations to fill their table with friends or colleagues.
- Offer custom event t-shirts or swag as conversation starters or thank-you gifts.
- Recognize board-hosted tables publicly to boost visibility and ownership.

5 Serve as a mission ambassador

Why it works: Builds trust through peer influence

How:

- Speak at community events.
- Represent the organization at networking functions.
- Offer a testimonial for a grant or annual report.

4 Host a house party

Why it works: It's more social than sales

How:

- Invite friends to house for a wine night or lunch-and-learn.
- Let staff present the mission—board just hosts and mingles.
- Focus on connection, not pressure.

3 Review list of donors to identify people you know

Why it works: They're connectors, not closers

How:

- Bring a guest to an event.
- Forward a fundraising appeal with a short personal note.
- Recommend potential donors or sponsors for staff to contact.

2 Share Social Media Posts

Why it works: Easy amplification that expands reach

How:

- Like, share, or comment on organizational posts.
- Post a personal message about an upcoming fundraiser.
- Invite friends to follow the organization’s account.

1 Accompany staff members on a donor visit

Why it works: Builds board confidence while showing donors the strength of your leadership team

How:

- No pressure to ask, just to listen and share.
- Coach them to tell their “why I serve” story during the visit.
- Use the opportunity to model donor engagement in a real-world setting.
- Follow up together to reflect and encourage future involvement.

A Few More Tips

Provide a **'fundraising menu'** for board members to be involved

Celebrate each other success

Set **expectations** and **goals**

Give board members the **tools** they need to **succeed**

Thank You!

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