**Board Building Recommended Criteria©**

*A Resource of The Osborne Group, Inc.*

**Must Have** – those attributes, behaviors, attitudes, and competencies 100% of current and potential board members must possess without exception.

1. Ethical -- is honorable in actions and exhibits moral courage in key decision making on behalf of the organization, places the organization’s needs above personal gain.
2. Passion for the mission -- is an informed advocate, knows, and understands your mission, vision for the future, programs, and constituents. Openly supports your organizational values and programs and defends the mission under fire. Publicly identifies with the organization.
3. Has made your organization one of his or her top three philanthropic and volunteer priorities -- During his or her service, your organization is first, second or third priority among the places he or she gives to and/or volunteers for.
4. Generous, philanthropic donor – has already made a philanthropic investment commensurate with his or her ability; understands the role of philanthropy in the financial health of not-for-profits; gives generously to a variety of other charitable organizations (unless philanthropy and involvement is new to the individual), believes in the importance and power of philanthropy.
5. Strategic thinker – “One who is able to generate and apply organizational insights on a continual basis to achieve a competitive edge” (*The Strategic Thinking Institute*). One who is committed to purposeful and reflective thinking focused on strategy rather than tactics.
6. Actively participates (is willing and able to actively participate) in the work of the board and, as appropriate and within role, the work of the organization – Attends meetings, prepares in advance for meetings, shares insights and asks questions during meetings, attends fund development and other events and activities, represents the organization at functions, responds to requests from the CEO, board and volunteer leaders, and senior staff
7. Participates in (is willing to participate in) Fund Development – helps identify others who can invest in the organization, opens doors, helps develop engagement strategies, and participates in the engagement, solicitation, and stewardship of others.

**Very Importan**t – a high percentage of board members possess these qualities (40% to 70% based on organizational needs). The governance committee actively seek individuals with these qualities, behaviors and competencies and give preference to those who possess them providing the individual possesses all of the Must Have criteria.

1. Personal philanthropic capacity to give – the ability and inclination to make personally meaningful philanthropic investments
2. Network of influence and/or affluence in philanthropic and other societal sectors and a willingness to actively share the network with the organization – based on the mission, vision, values, and strategic direction of the organization, he or she has access to a needed network or networks and opens doors and makes introductions accordingly
3. Strong government connections
4. Meets diversity goals – with a commitment to diversity of all kinds, individual board members bring ethnic, age, gender, cultural, geographic, and/or religious diversity to the board or committee

**Helpful** – in addition to Must Have and Very Important criteria, some of the board members bring additional, helpful skills and attributes (one of two members).

1. Experienced board member and/or leader
2. Needed expertise based on the vision and strategic directions
3. Other (specify)