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**Peer-to-Peer Board Fund Development Engagement Plan©**

*A Resource of The Osborne Group, Inc.*

*Tailor this letter to the board leaders visiting other members of the board – or use this as a jumping off point for your own visits with board members.*

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**DRAFT COVER LETTER**

Dear (name of director),

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this crucial activity. The Board as a group, and directors individually, provide leadership for our organization as it works to carry out its mission, vision, and strategic plan.

The following conversation outline is for discussion and decision making as you plan your visit. It is important to get the flow of the meeting and the roles each person will play agreed upon in advance, key points to make and strategic questions to ask. No meeting goes exactly as planned, but with the strategy clearly in mind, no matter what changes and unexpected threads occur, you won’t miss the priority activities.

Your visit purpose and agenda are aids. By sharing them when securing the appointment and confirming them along with the amount of time reserved for the meeting, you can better shape the meeting, keep on track and, should the person you are visiting go off in unproductive directions, bring the meeting back to core topics.

I am available to discuss these visits with you before you get started. Please reach out to me at….

Sincerely,

Name

Title

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**BRIEFING MEMO**

**Date & Time of Visit: Location:**

**Name of director to be visited**: **Phone numbers (cell, work, home):**

**Specific areas of strength:**

*(Filled in by staff and board leader in advance)*

**Specific areas of concern:**

*(Filled in by staff and board leader in advance – for either section this might include donor profile or background information on attendance, committee assignments, giving, raising money from others and other key factors based on the established board performance measures)*

**Purposes of the Visit:**

1. Let the board member know that his or her past contributions of wisdom, time, expertise, philanthropy, and contacts are valued and appreciated.
2. Uncover ways to maximize wisdom, expertise, time, philanthropy, influence and talent in ways that provide value to your organization and satisfaction and value for the person with whom you are visiting.
3. Plan for the year ahead, maximizing each director’s time, interests, talents, contacts and expertise.
4. Review the past year in terms of satisfaction and contribution to the organization.
5. Learn more about each member’s philanthropic and volunteer motivation, interests and values.
6. Gain agreement on a personal plan – a plan that is good for the board member and good for the organization; for some this may include a solicitation; for others it may be a precursor for a solicitation

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**SAMPLE SCRIPT FOR THE VISIT**

**Opening Comments (5 minutes)**

*“Thank you for taking the time to meet with me and thank you for all you do for Girls Inc. We are especially appreciative for (specific contributions and how they made specific impacts). Leadership matters a great deal to success and your role as a leader is valued and appreciated.”*

(PAUSE – let the person you are meeting with respond to your praise. Be sure you are comfortable sharing these accomplishments. Authenticity and sincerity are crucial.)

*At the top of our agenda for this meeting is finding ways to maximize your wisdom, expertise, time, philanthropy, contacts, and talent in ways that provide value to our mission, and satisfaction for you. I’d like to begin by asking you some general questions and then move to ones that are more specific. Would that be all right with you? Is an hour still feasible?”*

**Questions You Might Ask (20 minutes)**

1. What is it about our organization you find the most motivating?
2. How does that compare with other institutions in which you are involved?
3. What causes are you most passionate about? How so?
4. Where on your list of philanthropies, in terms of investing money and time, are we? Can you say more about that?
5. As you think about your work on our behalf what stands out for you?
6. To what degree do the values that underpin our mission, vision, and work, dovetail with your values? Can you say more about that?
7. From your perspective, what is the most significant contribution you have made towards moving our mission, vision, and work forward?
8. How do you like being involved with not-for-profits? How do you like to make meaningful contributions of time, talent, wisdom, and expertise?
   * To what degree are we maximizing your wisdom, talent, time, and expertise?
   * What do we need to do differently?
   * What do you need to do differently?
9. This year you served on the following committees and task forces (name here). In what ways do you feel you contributed to the work of (get an answer for each committee, task force)?
   * How could we have maximized your talent, time, wisdom, and expertise?

* How can we maximize your involvement on that (those) committees?
* There are many other ways to help move our mission, vision, and work forward. How else can we engage you?
* How well do you feel you know and understand our work, the people we serve, our strategic plan (for newer board members)?

1. If asked, do you feel confident you could share the mission, vision, and work with others, accurately and passionately? (If not, “What do you need to do so you can? How can we help you?”)

**Issues if applicable (10 minutes)**

1. I noticed … (Insert here whatever deficit you want to discuss).

For example, *“I noticed our meeting schedule has been challenging for you. One of the important criteria we have identified for all board members is being knowledgeable so we can each make informed and wise decisions. How do you see your ability to attend more meetings changing over the year ahead?”*

**Annual Engagement and Giving Plan (20 minutes)**

1. Going forward, there are a number of ways in which we would like to engage with you. (Here is where you might discuss board committee assignments, ambassador responsibilities, personal giving, identifying and introducing us to others, hosting and attending engagement activities, solicitation of others, providing stewardship) and developing a personalized plan for the year.
2. *“Thank you for agreeing to continue your work on these important assignments. I’d also like to discuss with you your annual investment in (name). I know you care deeply about (giver’s personal motivation and values). Do I have that right? As you know, donors investing in (appropriate leadership giving level name) help us continue to achieve (tied back to donor’s giving motivations and interests).*

***That is why I ask that you join me with an increased investment in our mission, and work of $xx,xxx.* (Ask for a specific amount and then stay quiet. Do not speak until after the donor speaks.)**

Listen. If there are objections, empathize, then go back to the donor’s motivations and values. *“I can understand why this size investment feels challenging at this time. As leaders, however, it is our responsibility to do as much as we are able. For example, I’m giving my gift in quarterly installments to help me achieve this higher amount. How might you find your way in joining me*?” PAUSE. If the donor still says he or she can’t, be understanding and accept graciously the amount offered.

**Wrap up (5 minutes)**

1. Is there anything I have not asked you, or we have not discussed, that you feel would be helpful for us to know as we plan for the coming year?
2. Is there anything you would like to know or questions you have?

*“Thank you again for your time. This has been a most helpful and engaging visit. Based on our discussion, I will send you a copy of your personalized Engagement and Giving Plan. Please look it over carefully when you receive it to make sure I have accurately captured all we have said.*

*Thank you again for your service and all that you do for our organization.”*

*If you would like to learn more about Board development, asking strategic questions, listening, or any aspect of volunteer management and/or institutional advancement or fund development, contact us at 914 428-7777 or* [*mail@theosbornegroup.com*](mailto:mail@theosbornegroup.com)*. You can visit us at* [*www.theosbornegroup.com*](http://www.theosbornegroup.com) *or find us on LinkedIn, YouTube or Facebook.*

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