

And now, for a little humor:

A Board *Disorientation* Manual

This information has been compiled to help you assimilate into our organization. Basically don't worry about anything because everything is a staff responsibility. You won't be bothered with tasks, responsibilities or requirements that other organizations have. Enjoy yourself, see and be seen with important people! Impress your friends!

Make certain that you always complain about something at each meeting. Even if the subject is minor, make it into something major. This way other board members will be impressed with your knowledge of the organization -- chiefly because they have no knowledge and your loud concerned tone will make it seem like you know everything.

It is critical to the board staff relationship to keep the director on edge. Make certain that the executive director knows that you think you could do his/her job better than he/she does. Bonus points for suggesting that your wife's uncle's cousin wants to help out in the administrative part. You will be especially grateful since this wonderful person just finished his G.E.D. in prison and needs a job as a condition of parole.

Give advice freely; its one of the reasons you were chosen for this board. It isn't necessary to provide any actual assistance -- the advice is enough.

Always complain about not receiving information from the organization. Imply that you were overlooked because of a conspiracy or inefficiency on the part of staff. Bonus points for implying both!

Avoid contacting the organization's office to ask for help on an agency project. Wait until you can complain in an open meeting about not being informed or helped.

"I've got a call in to..." is an acceptable committee report. You don't have to call other board members about anything -- that is clearly a staff responsibility. The novice may think he/she actually will have work in this area but with proper timing it just isn't so. Keep using the "I've got a call in to..." as you report until everyone gets irritated and blames the executive director.

In the end remember what a valuable service you are giving to the organization: your "name" with no money; your "advice" with no help; and your willingness to serve on the board (providing there is no actual work).

We forgot to mention "fundraising." Forget it, you are too important to us without that and besides, that is why we hired a C.E.O. / Executive Director.

Don't worry about keeping up with information. After all you shouldn't have to waste your time reading the list serv or the minutes... that's a staff responsibility.