

# Development Committee—Do You Need One?

The simple answer is yes. Part of creating a culture of giving starts with volunteer leaders feeling committed to fundraising. A development committee provides a meaningful way for leaders to provide strategic oversight of fundraising and serve as a good example of fundraising engagement for the rest of the board. Here are three different committee options that may work for your organization:

**Tips:** Staff-driven fundraising planning is key here. Map out costs and anticipated revenue, and make sure your plan is clear and achievable. Share the draft with your finance and development committees or chairs to get feedback and buy-in.

Here are three development committee options:

## **Committee Option 1: All Board Members**

Your development committee can be composed entirely of board members. This can be useful in garnering strong levels of engagement throughout the entire board. The downside is that your board members may get burned out quickly, distracted with other board committee service, or lack the interest or skill set to take this hands-on approach to fundraising.

## **Committee Option 2: Blended Membership**

Another alternative is to include non-board members who are prospective board candidates, those with incredible capacity/networks but who don't want to serve on the board, and/or past board members that want to remain involved in the organization.

This allows you to involve a broader network of volunteers, which can also help you identify future potential board leaders. If you choose this blended model, development committee chair should be a board member who provides reports during each board meeting.

## **Committee Option 3: No Development Committee**

Sometimes organizations just don't have a development committee at all. This is not an ideal situation, but board transitions, burnout, or other internal issues can get in the way of retaining successful volunteer leaders.

In this case, the development director or executive director will need to drive fundraising strategies and priorities for the board and work with board leadership to identify the next committee leader from the current slate of board members, major prospects, or donors you'd like to become more involved.