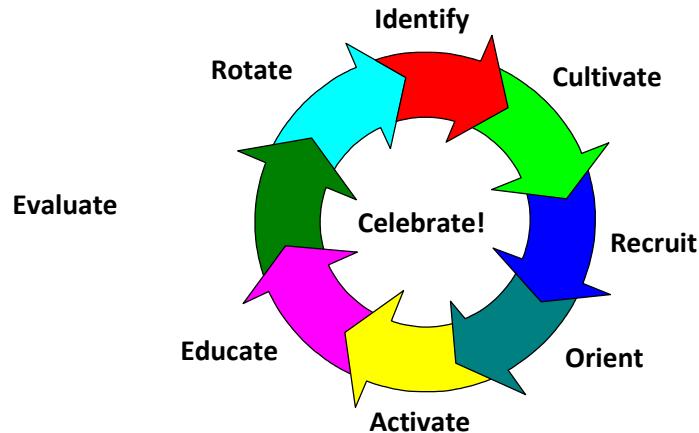


The Board Building Cycle



Step 1: Identify board needs (Skills, knowledge, perspective, connections, etc., needed to implement the strategic plan). What do we have? What is missing? Identify sources of board members with the needed characteristics.

Step 2: Cultivate potential board members. Get them interested in your organization and keep them informed of your progress.

Step 3: Recruit prospects. Describe why a prospective member is wanted and needed. Describe expectations and responsibilities of board members, and don't minimize requirements. Invite questions, and elicit their interest and preparedness to serve.

Step 4: Orient new board members to the organization – program, history, bylaws, pressing issues, finances, facilities, organization chart – and to the board – recent minutes, committees, board member responsibilities, lists of board members and key staff members.

Step 5: Activate/Engage all board members. Discover their interests and availability. Involve them in committees or task forces. Assign them a board “buddy.” Solicit feedback. Hold everyone accountable. Express appreciation for work well done.

Step 6: Educate the board. Provide information concerning your mission area. Promote exploration of issues facing the organization. Don't hide difficulties. Celebrate accomplishments.

Step 7: Evaluate the board and individual board members. Engage the board in assessing its own performance. Identify ways in which to improve. Encourage individual self-assessment.

Step 8: Rotate board members. Consider using term limits. Do not automatically re-elect for an additional term; consider the board's needs and the board member's performance. Explore the possibility of advising members who are not active to resign. Develop new leadership.

Step 9: Celebrate! Recognize victories and progress, even small ones. Appreciate individual contributions to the board, the organization, and the community. Make room for humor and a good laugh.