



## The Prospero Group e-Newsletter

### March 2010

We're pleased to present the latest edition of News From The Prospero Group. We hope you find our message valuable and we encourage you to pass our e-newsletter along to friends and colleagues. In this issue, we examine the role a board of trustees plays in creating a culture of philanthropy for an organization.

As always, we welcome your questions, comments and suggestions. Please feel free to contact us.

### Our Team

**Doris Feinberg, CFRE**  
President

**James Link**  
Senior Consultant

**Trine Lustig**  
Senior Consultant

**Susanne Shavelson**  
Senior Consultant

**Chani Adams**  
Director of Operations

## Getting the Most from Your Board

A strong board that knows its job can be the difference between a struggling organization and one that thrives. Board members should be:

- Leaders**, who embrace the organization's mission
- Givers**, who make meaningful gifts and lead by example
- Scouts**, who identify prospects and recruit volunteers
- Promoters**, who advance the organization's vision

There are times, however, when a nonprofit's leaders may feel that they are not getting what they need from the members of the board. In particular, board members may have failed to make a significant financial commitment to supporting the organization or be reluctant to solicit gifts from others. It is the chair's role to make board members' obligations clear.

The chair should lead by example to create a healthy culture of philanthropy at the board level. He or she should announce his or her annual or capital gift at a board meeting and then challenge the rest of the board to make equally meaningful gifts. The chair should also discuss the giving requirement with any candidate for board membership.

Setting expectations at the outset is critical. After all, how much credibility will the board have if it can't be said that all members give?

Soliciting gifts from others is another essential board role, but it's one with which many feel uncomfortable. While solicitation training can help with this, it's important to remember that there are ways other than face-to-face solicitation to advance the organization's philanthropic culture. Board members—all of whom should be willing to leverage their personal contact on behalf of the organization—can make introductions, provide background "intelligence" on prospects, host events and help acknowledge gifts.

Every board member should be willing to represent the organization in the community, act as a “cheerleader” and do whatever he or she can to convey the importance of supporting the organization’s work. The key assets every board member should bring can be described in terms of the 4T’s: Time, Talent, Treasure and Tentacles. Every member of the board should be ready to contribute effort, skills, funds and connections. These may take different forms, but they are essential to an effective board.

---

## About The Prospero Group

The Prospero Group, LLC, provides fundraising counsel that ensures lasting growth and change for non-profit organizations. We promote effective governance models and principled leadership to empower professionals and boards as the driving forces of philanthropy.

### Services:

#### Capital Campaign Planning and Oversight

- Organizational assessments
- Feasibility studies and benchmarking
- Campaign case development
- Pre-campaign planning
- Campaign oversight

#### Solicitation Training

#### Strategic Development Program Planning

- Development program assessments
- Major & planned giving program design
- Grant funding
- Annual fund management and production
- Prospect profiling and wealth screening
- Evaluating and recommending fundraising technology
- Staff mentoring

#### Board Development

- Board evaluation & assessment
- Board governance education
- Philanthropic leadership training
- Board solicitation training

Learn more at [www.prosperogroup.com](http://www.prosperogroup.com)



### The Prospero Group, LLC

425 Gibbs Avenue  
Newport, RI 02840

[dfeinberg@prosperogroup.com](mailto:dfeinberg@prosperogroup.com)  
[www.prosperogroup.com](http://www.prosperogroup.com)