Welcoming New Board Members

Almost every year a new volunteer joins your board of directors. How do you make him or her feel welcome? We suggest:

**Send a Welcome Packet to the Board**

Include such items as:

- Welcome letter signed by the executive director and the board president.
- Description of the duties of board members.
- Copies of the minutes from last year’s board meetings. (Review the minutes first and send only relevant information -- no need to bury your new member in paper!)
- A copy of the latest strategic plan, if you have one.
- Board governing documents, including by-laws, policies, etc.
- A copy of the most current business plan, including the budget for the coming year.
- A list of all the board officers and board members, including address, phone number, e-mail address, fax number, and a brief bio.
- Committee descriptions, goals, and list(s) of committee members.
- A copy of all the brochures your organization issues.

**Make Introductions**

At the first board meeting that the new members attend, be sure to introduce them and give a brief description of their backgrounds. Ask if they=\d like to make any additional comments about their participation. Then have all of the other members introduce themselves. (It=\s probably a good idea to notify your members beforehand that they may be asked to say a few words of welcome, so that no one gets taken by surprise.)

**Communicate to Members**

Include an announcement about new board members in your newsletter, if you have one. At a minimum, write a letter to your staff and volunteers indicating who the new board members are; provide biographical information and a photo, if possible.

**Inform the Public**

Send out a press release about the new board members to your local newspaper(s). Include biographical info and photo(s).

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