



# Fast Fundraising Facts & Other Essentials

## Making Meetings Meaningful

Are your Board meetings well attended or do you have to struggle to gain a quorum? Do Board members arrive on time and stay until the business is completed, or do they straggle in late and leave early?

While I admit that it is often easy to place the “blame” on Board members for their lack of attendance at regular Board meetings, I think you should listen to what these actions are telling you about the meetings themselves.

Are you running effective and efficient meetings? Are meetings meaningful? Does it matter whether a volunteer attends ... or not?



reports and other pertinent information to Board members *before the meeting* and expect them to come prepared to act, having read the materials *in advance*.

☑ Don't waste valuable time at a Board meeting reading minutes, the Executive Director's report or going over financials line by line unless there is a compelling reason to do so (meaning, the discussion requires Board action.)

Here are some simple things you can do to ensure your Board meetings are efficient and meaningful.

### Respect Volunteer and Staff Time.

- ☑ Establish a reasonable time limit for normal meetings and stick to it.
- ☑ Start on time. If there is no quorum after 15 minutes, adjourn the meeting to respect those who arrived in a timely manner.
- ☑ Expect Board members to alert the Board President *in advance* if they can't make a meeting so if there won't be a quorum, the President can cancel the meeting *in advance*.
- ☑ Prepare an agenda with time limits for each item if meetings tend to run on and on. Appoint a time keeper to move the business along.
- ☑ Require committee reports in writing and only discuss those items which require Board action or discussion...do not review ongoing committee work at full Board meetings.
- ☑ End meetings on time.

### Give Important Information In Advance.

- ☑ Send meeting agenda, minutes, financial report, committee reports, Executive Director

### Give Purpose to Meetings.

- ☑ Hold an annual planning retreat to determine long term vision and establish annual goals and priorities.
- ☑ Delegate goals to appropriate committees and require annual committee plans of work.
- ☑ Report action against plans at Board meetings, using consistent committee report format (see sample in **The ABCs of Building Better Boards**).
- ☑ Consider a regular time for brainstorming new ideas and new priorities at Board meetings if there is little business requiring Board action.

### Manage Meetings and Business.

- ☑ Delegate committee discussions to committees.
- ☑ Use Robert's Rules (or at least a modified version of them) to move the business along.

In summary, make your meetings meaningful and volunteers will see value in attending them.

## Robert's Rules Made Eas(ier)

### To Introduce Business – Make a Primary Motion:

“I move that...” You may not interrupt the speaker. The motion must be seconded. It is debatable and amendable and requires a majority vote to carry the motion.

### To Amend a Motion:

“I move that this motion be amended by...”. You may not interrupt the speaker. The motion must be seconded. It is debatable and amendable and requires a majority vote to carry the motion.

### To Suspend Further Consideration about Something:

“I move we table [it].” You may not interrupt the speaker. The motion must be seconded. It is not debatable or amendable. A majority vote is required to carry the motion.

### To End the Debate:

“I move the previous question.” You may not interrupt the speaker. The motion must be seconded. It is debatable and amendable and a two-thirds vote is required to carry the motion. You may move to postpone an issue or decision until a future definite time by saying, “I move we postpone this matter until...”. Its requirements are the same as those for ending the debate.

### To Object to Procedure or to a Personal Affront:

“Point of order.” You may interrupt the speaker. No second is needed. The motion is not debatable or amendable and no vote is required. The chair decides the matter.

### To Ask for a Vote by Actual Count to Verify a Voice Count:

“I call for a division of the house.” You may not interrupt the speaker. No second is needed. It is not debatable or amendable. No vote is required unless someone objects. In this case, a majority is required to carry the motion.

### To Vote on a Ruling by the Chairperson:

“I appeal the chairperson’s ruling.” You may interrupt the speaker. It must be seconded. It is debatable but is not amendable. A majority in the negative is required to reverse the chair’s decision.

### To Adjourn the Meeting:

“I move that we adjourn.” You may not interrupt the speaker. It must be seconded. It is not debatable or amendable. A majority vote is required to carry the motion.

Whew!

## Where Is Your Money Coming From?

As you review and update your development plan, I hope that you are including diverse sources of revenue, including grants from foundations and corporations, annual giving from individuals, planned giving, major gift campaigns, events, sponsorships and underwriting, memberships (if applicable), etc.

I also hope that you are realistic about the need to diversify your revenue sources, since relying on traditional sources may be putting your organization at risk.

Nonprofits across the US have begun to develop entrepreneurial enterprises to reduce their reliance on traditional funding sources and in response to shrinking support.



The National Center for Social Entrepreneurs ([www.earnedincome.org](http://www.earnedincome.org)) and the Social Enterprise Alliance ([www.se-alliance.org](http://www.se-alliance.org)) are among the great resources available to you as you begin to look to new ways to sustain your programs and services.

Check out the Alliance’s Internet forum at [www.npEnterprise.net](http://www.npEnterprise.net).

To be sure, social enterprise efforts are more likely to succeed if they are based on what you currently know and have (your assets) and directly relate to your mission and core values. A great resource to help you along the path to successful social entrepreneurship is a book by Rolfe Larson, *Venture Forth! The Essential Guide to Starting a Moneymaking Business in Your Nonprofit Organization*, published by the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

## Internet Resources For Nonprofits

Data about revenue sources and giving can be found from the Johns Hopkins University Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project at [www.jhu.edu/cnp/](http://www.jhu.edu/cnp/).



Another good source about the income mix for nonprofits is available at Independent Sector in the Nonprofit Almanac at [www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org).

And while you are visiting the Independent Sector site, take a look at their recent

report on the growth rate for the nonprofit sector. Employees at nonprofits now represent 9.5% of all US employees, or 12.5 million individuals!

The Association of Fundraising Professionals has published their annual Compensation and Benefits Study for Nonprofits. You have to be a member of AFP to view the entire report at [www.afpnet.org](http://www.afpnet.org).

Lots of the sites I've found are hot linked from my web site. Of course, from time to time, organizations and sites disappear, so if you find a broken link on the site, please send me an email ([jean@jblockinc.com](mailto:jean@jblockinc.com)) and let me know. Thanks!

TWO GREAT BOOKS AVAILABLE NOW:

### ***THE ABCs OF BUILDING BETTER BOARDS and FAST FUNDRAISING FACTS FOR FAME & FORTUNE***

Now you can add two great books to your agency library. **The ABCs of Building Better Boards** is just what you need to improve your Board's potential. It includes ideas for recruitment, retention and recognition and has some great forms for you to copy and use.

Learn how to deal with unproductive Board members and how to better define the roles of staff and Board. There is a chapter on financial and fiduciary facts, one on simple parliamentary procedure and much, much more.

Discover how Board Job Descriptions and annual Commitment Letters will dramatically improve your Board's effectiveness. See how a truly effective Nominating Committee will lead to a better Board.

Get good ideas for more efficient Board management and administration, including how to set up and manage effective committees.

**It's only \$24.95 plus shipping and handling. Take advantage of a volume discount of up to 20% and give this book to all new Board members as part of their orientation.**

The 3rd edition of **Fast Fundraising Facts for Fame & Fortune** is full of ideas to improve your fundraising, including how to ask effectively, special events essentials, the Board's role in fundraising and new ideas for fundraising.

Help volunteers get over the fear of asking for money and in-kind resources for your organization. Learn how marketing principles will make fundraising easier.

Learn about **Jean's Ten Rules for Fundraising Success** and apply them to your organization immediately. This book puts the **FUN** into **FUND**raising and gives good examples and ideas that really work, rather than using hard to follow formulas and theories.

**It's only \$24.95 plus shipping and handling. Take advantage of a volume discount of up to 20% and give this book to all new Board members as part of their orientation.**

**Or buy both books for only \$45.00 plus shipping and handling.**

## HOW CAN I HELP YOU? TAKE THIS QUICKIE QUIZ

- Q: *Is your Board of Directors functioning at its highest level?*  
Q: *How successful is your current fundraising?*  
Q: *Do volunteers need help asking for money and in-kind resources?*  
Q: *Does your organization have a dynamic strategic plan?*  
Q: *Are you having fun?*

**Please give me a call if you want to turn any  
NO into a YES.**

I can help with:

- turning your Board into a dynamic group of volunteers,
- facilitating a strategic planning session,
- analyzing your current fundraising and suggesting some new ideas, and
- training volunteers and staff in becoming more effective fundraisers.

"I attended your workshop in St. Louis and left there feeling so uplifted by your motivation. Your training - to make us all savvy marketers - has paid off. Even in this economy, our underwriting is up and our auction donations have blown away everyone in town! We simply feel empowered to ask anyone and everyone AND to tell them WHY we are their market. It's working! Thank you!"

**Kirsten Wagneister**  
*Junior League of Evansville*

"Jean conducted an extremely well organized and productive [Board] retreat, one that I can say with confidence that our members count as the finest ever conducted for us. Jean's follow-up report was in-depth and meaty, and both Board and staff have referred to it time and again. The knowledge of boardmanship the members took with them has made a remarkable difference in their levels of commitment and support."

**Eileen Cook**  
*Casa Esperanza*

"Jean Block is a powerhouse in the nonprofit world. You don't move about these circles long before her name is prominent in the conversation. Her commitment to training, fundraising, motivating, and cultivation is unsurpassed. To say she is an influence is to miss the point. She gives new meaning to the word enthusiasm! You don't know Jean, you experience her! She is a force unlike any other I have ever met."

**Randy Gleason**  
*UNM Children's Hospital*

"I attended the Corporate Sponsorship Workshop - WOW! You were amazing! What an OPPORTUNITY for me! Your presentation style was EXCELLENT. By far the best workshop I've been to in a long time (content and style both!)."

**Vicki Kopplin**  
*Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota*