

GENERIC JOB DESCRIPTION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ILLINOIS VALLEY YMCA

- TITLE:** Members, Board of Directors.
- PURPOSE:** To determine policies, procedures and regulations for the conduct of the YMCA; to raise funds to finance the organization and its programs.
- TERM:** Three years (unless elected to fill an expired term).
- MEETING ATTENDANCE:** Regularly – Monthly Board meetings (12 per year).
Standing Committee (1 or 2 meetings vary).
Ad Hoc Committees (as appointed).
Special events (as announced).
Occasionally – YMCA program events (as Board representative).
- RESPONSIBLE TO:** Chairperson, Board of Directors.
- RESIGNATION:** In writing, to the Chairperson.
- PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:**
1. Unquestionable character (the Association will accomplish it's purpose when its leaders demonstrate the purpose of the YMCA through their own lives).
 2. An interest in the goals, objectives and programs of the YMCA.
 3. High standing among the men and women of his/her profession or business.
 4. A respected citizen in the community.
 5. A breadth of understanding and tolerance of the view points of others.
 6. The willingness to state one's conviction – and equally the willingness to accept the majority decision when in conflict with one's own stand.
 7. Willingness to deal openly and directly with the staff and other Board members when pleased, or displeased, about something.

**RESPONSIBILITIES
AND POWERS OF
THE BOARD OF
DIRECTORS:**

1. Establish policies for administering the program and services which are in harmony with the purpose of the YMCA.

2. Employ the Executive Director. (If a Branch, approve the selection of the Branch Director as nominated by the Executive Director).

Elect other members of the staff upon nomination by the Executive Director.

3. Secure funds required for current expenses by mobilizing the entire volunteer and staff forces for active participation in funding efforts.

4. Insure that the financial affairs of the Association are conducted on a responsible basis in accordance with established policies.

**SPECIFIC
DUTIES OF
THE BOARD
OF DIRECTORS:**

1. Attendance at Board meetings (participation here as a policy maker and planner is the most important part of the job).

- Attend regularly and on time.
- Become well informed (in advance) on all agenda items.
- Contribute knowledge and express points of view based on experience.
- Consider other points of view, make constructive suggestions, and help the Board make group decisions reflecting the thinking of the total group.

2. Attendance at meetings of Standing Committees, as well as any special Ad Hoc Committee, to which appointed.

3. Become a financial supporter of the Association at an appropriate level.

4. Assume leadership in Association funding efforts.

5. Assume Board leadership responsibilities as requested and as possible (such as committee Chairperson, elected officer, etc.).

6. Represent the Association at community events, organizations and with private individuals, when specifically asked by the Board Chairperson.

7. Be informed about the Association's programs, policies and services.

8. Be informed about the needs of the community, society and constituents.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD BOARD MEMBER
From The Volunteer Board Member in Philanthropy

AM I A GOOD BOARD MEMBER?

Is it possible to identify the attributes of the perfect volunteer Board member? The question is, of course, academic, because all human beings are a combination of strengths and of weaknesses. A good Board, therefore, blends imperfect human beings into an effective working team.

These are, however, certain attitudes which help to make one a good Board member. Some of these are listed here:

A GOOD BOARD MEMBER:

1. Is dedicated to helping others and modest in the light of his/her responsibilities as a Board member.
2. Approaches his/her responsibilities in the spirit of a trustee on behalf of contributors, their intended beneficiaries, and the public at large.
3. Stands up for his/her convictions, even at the cost of misunderstanding or disapproval in his/her business or social life.
4. Backs up other Board members and staff, rising to their defense when they are unjustly criticized or attacked.
5. Treats staff as a partner in a high calling, while maintaining overall supervision and control.
6. Avoids being overawed by others on the Board, whether they be executive staff; tycoons or business, labor or society; professionals in social work, education, medicine, etc.
7. Welcomes information and the best available advice, but reserves the right to arrive at decisions on the basis of his/her own judgment.
8. Respects the right of other Board members and of staff to disagree with him/her and to have a fair hearing of their points of view.
9. Accepts as routine that decisions must be made by majority vote and will at times go against him/her.
10. Criticizes when necessary, in a constructive way if possible, suggesting an alternative course.
11. Recognizes that his/her time and energy are limited and that over-commitment may prove self-defeating.
12. Endeavors to keep disagreements and controversies impersonal, and to promote unity.
13. Maintains loyalty to his/her agency, within a higher loyalty to the welfare of the community and humanity as a whole.

SOME DO's AND DON'T's FOR YMCA BOARD MEMBERS

We don't manage the YMCA. A moment's thought should convince anyone that a group of individuals who get together every month or two cannot be seriously regarded as managing the organization. We govern, the executive manager.

We don't set strategy. This rule is full of subtleties. To begin with, if the Board were to set strategy, it would, in the process, give away its power and responsibility for questioning and evaluating strategy alternatives. It would also be separating the responsibility for setting strategy from that of implementing it – a fatal split.

We are responsible for assuring long run survival of the YMCA. The board is dedicated to maintaining the viability of the corporation.

Other rules govern individual behavior of Board Members.

No fighting. Agreement and rational decisions are possible only through analysis and dialogue, not through aggression and threat. A boardroom fight can raise question in the minds of members and the public about the quality of governance and, hence, the future health of the YMCA.

No crusades. We seek to serve the needs of society through effective corporate performance in providing programs and services. Do your crusading elsewhere.

Do your homework. Study the information given to you. Directors are expected to be sharpshooters, not hipshooters.

Participate. Be present, be thoughtful, be participative. This is not a spectator sport.

Support your CEO. You, the Board, chose him. His success validates your wisdom. His job is a complex and demanding one, the pressures are enormous. In working with him, you as a Director must distinguish between counsel and criticism.

Serve your apprenticeship. Listen, watch and learn. Ask questions. Make your apprenticeship intensive but short. You have been invited onto the Board with the expectation that you have a contribution to make. The Board is waiting for it.

Be prepared to counsel with your CEO. This is one-on-one activity between you and the CEO that starts initially with the assumption that you are a person of good judgment. You offer counsel when you think it is needed. You also respond to his request.

Watch for straws in the wind. You are never off-duty. Use the telephone and pass things on to the CEO for exploration, or to fellow Directors for evaluation.

Finally, to sum it up, we as Board members are responsible for assessing the performance of our top staff person, but without goals on which to judge his performance, we cannot fulfill this responsibility.

Adapted by Marion P. White, President of the Central Bucks YMCA, and Kenneth J. White, General Director, from a Wall Street Journal article of March 21, 1983 by Thomas L. Whisler, University of Chicago professor with further adaptations by the Delaware Valley YMCA Management Resource Center.

RECOMMENDATION FOR BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Please complete all the information possible and return it to the YMCA Executive. Do NOT discuss it with the candidate until the nomination has been approved by the Board. ALL recommendations will be considered by the Nomination Committee.

Name _____ Age _____

Home Address _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Children(ages/sex) _____

Business Position/Title _____

Name of Firm _____

Type of Business _____

Education _____

Service Club Membership _____

Leadership Roles (past/Present) _____

Church Affiliation _____

Leadership Roles (past/Present) _____

YMCA Involvement (past/present)

Other Community Involvement and Leadership (past/present)

Other Information

Person making recommendation _____

COMPLETE DETAILS WILL GREATLY ASSIST
THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE IN DOING A THOROUGH JOB