



## Personal Qualities of Board Members

The personal qualities of board members are critical to your board's successful operation. Integrity, competence, insight, dedication and effectiveness are vital. Key qualities of a good board member can be summarized as:

- Passion – deep interest in the mission of your organization.
- Vision and Leadership -- the ability to see the big picture and the courage to set direction to achieve the organization's mission.
- Stewardship -- the integrity to serve the interests and pursue the goals of your organization, as well as the interests of the public and your organization's intended beneficiaries.
- Knowledge -- knowledge of your constituents and operations and organizational and managerial acumen.
- Diligence -- dedication and commitment to fulfilling your organization's goals.
- Collegiality -- possessing a sincere and respectful attitude toward colleagues and their views.
- Discretion -- Maintains confidentiality of board discussions and speaks with one voice when representing the organization to the community

*- Adapted from The Society of Corporate Secretaries and Governance Professionals*

### **To be an effective board member:**

~Bring your personal interests and expertise to the nonprofit, but bear in mind your primary obligation of stewardship is to the organization as a whole.

~Come to meetings on time, be attentive and well-prepared.

~Respect disagreement without personalizing the debate, and avoid paralysis in the face of dissent.

~Ask questions rather than accepting the status quo.

~Welcome information and advice, but reserve the right to make decisions based on your own best judgment.

~Support board decisions, even when you disagree with majority.