CALLING ALL HR PROFESSIONALS: NONPROFIT BOARDS NEED YOU
HR PROFESSIONALS & NONPROFIT BOARDS

► Overview of the Project
► Key Research Findings
► 10 Ways You Can Impact a Nonprofit Board
► Tools/Resources
► Questions/Feedback
THE IMPACT OF BOARD SERVICE

- Board Placement
- Marketing Support
  - IT Assistance
  - Strategic Planning
- Tutoring
  - Junior Achievement
- Food Sorting
- Board Service
- Pro Bono Service
- Skilled Volunteering
- Hands-on Volunteering

Strategic Magnitude of Impact
- High
- Low

Number of employees engaged
- High
- Low
“What if every board had a Treasurer of Human Capital?”

- Aaron Hurst, President & Founder of Taproot, 2009 BoardSource Leadership Forum Keynote Speech
WHAT IS “LITERACY” RELATIVE TO A BOARD?

LITERACY is enough familiarity with an area to understand issues and challenges to aid decision making.

- Boards often focus on Financial Literacy.

- Other kinds of literacy are highly relevant to board service:
  - HR Literacy
  - Marketing Literacy
  - IT
  - Legal
  - Engineering
PROJECT OVERVIEW

META GOAL: To identify new opportunities for board leadership that:
• Create tangible entry points for board service
• Provide practical tools for organizations to identify, recruit, orient and engage new board leadership

DELIVERABLES:
• Recommended “roles” for HR professionals within the board
• Handbooks and how to guide for engaging new board leaders

METHODOLOGY

INTERVIEWS
• 24 interviews with professionals (both on and not on boards) and nonprofit Executive Directors

SURVEY
• 261 responses from professionals (both on and not on boards)
THE OPPORTUNITY

87% of surveyed HR professionals are interested in board service

1,081,520 HR Professionals (US)

HR PROFESSIONALS CAN

- Play a key role in the strategic planning process
- Bring a different lens to tackle organizational challenges
- Help assess the skills of the entire board
- Hire and evaluate the CEO
95% said it’s important to share their expertise with the organization

TOP THREE REASONS TO JOIN A BOARD

- A positive volunteer experience with the organization
- To use professional skills to help a nonprofit
- Professional networking
PROFESSIONALS WHO DON’T SERVE ON BOARDS

9 in 10 expressed some interest in serving on a nonprofit board

BARRIERS TO BOARD SERVICE

- Don’t know where to start or who to approach
- Time commitment
- Reluctance to fundraise
- Uncertain about what role to play
WHY DON’T MORE PROFESSIONALS SERVE ON BOARDS?

Consistent Finding: LACK OF AWARENESS on both sides

**HR Professionals want information on**
- Need for board service
- How to get started
- How to leverage their specific skill set, once engaged

**Nonprofits need education about**
- HR in general
- How to articulate what they NEED to these professionals
- What these professionals can do for their boards
HOW HR PROFESSIONALS CAN DRIVE IMPACT FOR A NONPROFIT BOARD
CASE STUDY

THE PROFESSIONAL
Charlotte Stuart, Former VP, Organizational Performance & Development, BECU

THE NONPROFIT

THE NEED & FIT
“I don’t need the board to be as much of a networking/professional development gain, but rather a way to give back to the community. The very nature of being in HR, you’re always thinking about what else needs to be done — what could I do to improve this process, what can I bring to the table? I have a broad focus; it’s the way we think in HR”

► Helping the board hire an auditor
► Change management
► Planning board retreat

“What I appreciated was that the organization understood I was interested in helping them, but not by doing hands-on volunteer work. Community in Schools recognized that they need people like me to help in other ways.”
“Many nonprofits lack the financial resources and knowledge to optimize the capabilities of both staff and board members. An HR executive could provide the perspective and tools to guide the nonprofit to improved performance.”
2 Find access to pro bono resources

“Human capital is a horrible thing to waste. Too often nonprofits struggle with limited or no access to technicians that can enable their cause.”
3 Counsel the Chief Executive during personnel crisis situations

“I assisted in an emergency board meeting and helped investigate a sexual harassment case between an employee and program manager.”
4 Change management

“I could help [the board] to understand the impact of change and how to drive desired change in the organization.”
Serve on the Governance Committee

“I’ve found my work on the governance committee very rewarding. Being a seasoned organizational development professional, I feel I have been utilized in the organization’s efforts to transcend its business as usual and to create a sustainable legacy.”
“Companies are now recognizing the importance of HR, how well companies engage their talent; at nonprofits, you have the ability to demonstrate the differences between passive HR policies and proactive HR policies.”
Help with hiring, and when necessary, firing the chief executive

“[The board member with human resources expertise] was on my search committee and was very integral in the process. Our most valuable resource is human capital and this person puts us in a position to attract other leaders with competency and strategic direction.”
Help with management and regular assessment of the chief executive

“The board recognized that the executive director’s performance wasn’t where it needed to be...[but if] performance expectations are not clearly outlined [it is] impossible to approach [the] individual to assess [his or her] performance.”
Help develop compensation philosophies and policies, and determine chief executive compensation

“I was able to help with researching best practices, contribute to developing a contract for [the executive director] and also look at salary levels to inform the appropriate level of compensation. I wanted to make sure that we had good retention strategies in place. It would be devastating to lose her for a lack of proper policies or noncompetitive salary.”
Help lead the board through a self-assessment process

“Because of the very nature of HR, you’re always thinking about what else needs to be done — what could I do to improve this process, what can I bring to the table? I don’t know if other people, besides HR professionals, come to the board with that mind-set.”
HOW TO CONNECT WITH NONPROFITS
1. DETERMINE YOUR INTERESTS

- What causes do I care about most?
- What type of organization and board will best match my personal interests and working style?
- Where am I already volunteering?
2. FIND AN ORGANIZATION THAT FEELS RIGHT

BOARD MATCHING PROGRAMS
Bridgestar: www.bridgestar.org
Corporation for National and Community Service: www.serve.gov; www.allforgood.org
VolunteerMatch: www.volunteermatch.org
Boardnet USA: www.boardnetusa.org

CORPORATIONS
Board placement programs via your Public Affairs / Community Involvement departments

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS
Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) www.shrm.org

PRO BONO VOLUNTEERING
Taproot Foundation: www.taprootfoundation.org
Catchafire: www.catchafire.org
Sparked: www.sparked.org
3. DO YOUR DUE DILIGENCE

- Once you've identified an organization you’re interested in and is recruiting, find out everything you can about the nonprofit.

- Set up an interview with other board members or the Executive Director.

- Check out [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org) to review their Form 990.
4. UNDERSTAND WHAT BOARDS WANT

1. Proven interest in their mission
2. Knowledge and understanding of their work
3. Professional knowledge and skills needed by the board
4. Connections in the community (media, politics, health care)
5. Fundraising experience and willingness to participate
6. Ability to make a substantial financial contribution
7. Experience in working with people from other ethnic backgrounds
8. Ability to listen well
9. Ability to express ideas and opinions clearly
10. Ability to participate effectively in a conversation (neither monopolizing nor hanging back)
11. Sense of humor, positive presence
12. Ability to ask appropriate questions
13. Ability to participate on a regular basis in the board’s work
TOOLS & RESOURCES

FREE HANDBOOK AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD

www.taprootfoundation.org/leadprobono/board_service.php

www.boardsource.org/Workshops.asp?ID=147.528

SHARE YOUR STORY!
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QUESTIONS & CONTACT INFO

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