

An illustration of a woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark long-sleeved top and dark pants, standing on the left and gesturing towards a group of four people. The group consists of a woman with spiky dark hair in a pink top, a woman with long dark hair in a dark top, a woman with dark curly hair in a blue top, and a man with a beard and glasses in a striped shirt. The background is a light blue wall with several rectangular panels.

Getting Ready to Choose a Nonprofit Board

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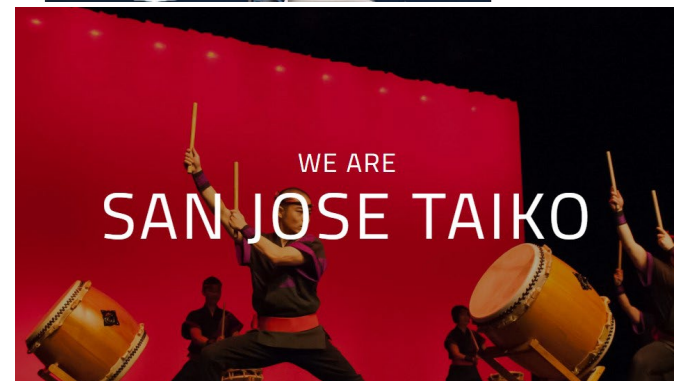


Thinking beyond “a cause”

These are all “arts & culture” organizations but incredibly different in size, scope, focus, strategy, structure, staffing, and board.



LOCAL COLOR



Choosing a Nonprofit Reflections Exercise.

1. What am I really interested in? (issues, communities, impact, policy)

2. Where do I feel the most comfortable? Nonprofits have different management and oversight needs at different stages of their life cycle. What would you like most?:

- Grassroots, small organization
- Startup or relatively new organization
- Founder-driven and/or where there is a strong personality at the CEO/ED position.
- Transitional group:
 - where the organization is adapting to external changes or redefining its core strategy
 - Where an organization is going through major internal transition (executive transition, major staff turnover, restructuring)
- More established board/organization without any significant opportunities or challenges



3. What role do I want? (Yes, No, Maybe)

- I want to be a catalyst for change on the board and/or the organization – sparking innovation, leading the efforts to grapple with challenging strategic questions.
- I prefer implementing change and/or executing on a strategy and established plans.
- I prefer to be involved in strategic questions, but more as a “team member” and in a “learning/following” role.
- I want to be very hands-on and have as much “support board activity” as I do governance responsibilities.
- I want to primarily be focused on governance roles such as oversight/fiduciary; strategy; vision (i.e. – not management support/volunteer activities).

4. SKILLS/STRENGTHS/NETWORKS – both social and professional/EXPERIENCE – lived/professional. Be expansive in your brainstorm - both “workplace” qualities and personal qualities. Example of qualities you might also include beyond some usual “professional” qualities: facilitation skills; teaching/presenting; party organizer; recent immigrant; volunteer pastor; yoga instructor; conflict resolution; project manager.



5. TIME: What would be your monthly commitment of time outside of meetings? Are you willing to contribute more time during specific periods during the year?

6. MONEY/RESOURCES: What would be a gift meaningful to you? What other resources would you be willing to leverage for the organization (connections, corporate match, material in-kind)

7. What pragmatic requirements do I have?

- Close to home? Near work? National? International? Participate primarily online?
- How much travel time am I willing to put in?
- Can I meet during the day? In the evening? What about weekends?



Meet Your Needs. Prioritize: 1 being the highest priority.

Priority	What I want to gain from my board service
	Develop competencies/skills that I can use professionally
	Leadership & professional development
	Develop my professional network with other community leaders
	Be exposed to an issue or community that is new and different
	Expand my social network
	Do something completely different from my usual work/life
	An organization that address a very specific issue
	Promote diversity within boards/organizations
	Represent my community on the board
	Challenge myself
	Use my current professional skills/experience for a cause





Individual Reflections Exercise – Choosing a Board
Please complete the reflection exercise first before continuing the webinar

- What insight did you gain from the reflection exercise?
- Anything surprising?
- Anything you want to explore further (or reflect on longer)?
- How will it help you choose a board?



Go to questions about the Organization*

About the organization (beyond their mission statement)

- Tell me more about your major programs and projects?
- What's been the organization's biggest success to date?
- What are the organization's current biggest challenges?
- How is the organization funded? What is the organization's biggest concern when it comes to financial sustainability?
- What one thing that you think makes your organization stand out in your field, community?
- How do you evaluate your impact?

*These are in the handout sent out in advance named:
go to questions - LBLA board recruit



Go To questions about the board

About the board

- What are the expectations of board members?
 - Value add skills, connections, experience
 - Fundraising and financial commitment (any policies like give/get)
 - Time commitment
- What committees do you have? What is the process for putting people on committees?
- Tell me about a typical board meeting? What's discussed? Attendance? How often?
- How will you tap into my skills, connections, etc.? What ways can board members contribute time to the organization?
- What will orientation cover?
- Tell me how board and staff work together, interact?
- Who's on your board? What's the makeup of your board? Race, Gender, Class/Rank, Sector, Industry
- What's the biggest challenge the board is grappling with?
- What is the biggest impact the board has on the organization/mission?
- Ask about the board culture and dynamics: how are meetings facilitated? How is participation in meetings, in other activities? What are some talents and skills would help the functioning of the board?



Good Luck!

- Keep the board resources handy!
- Stay in touch.

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