



# STRATEGIC BOARD COMPOSITION MATRIX

Enhanced board recruitment is one way to shift away from solely focusing on fund raising and oversight and embrace all of the opportunities for exceptional board governance, including setting strategy and ensuring resources while still providing oversight. It allows your board to move toward becoming a purpose-driven board. Purpose-driven boards make sense of the circumstances causing the need for their organization, are aware of the collective purpose which their organization exists to advance and are intentional about hearing from and embracing the community they serve.

The first step in determining what you need is assessing the strengths and capital you have. A board that is similar in several ways negatively impacts its ability to make the best decisions and plans for the organization. A homogenous board, with a predominance of one race or gender, is particularly concerning, as it may select strategies and plans that ineffectively address social issues and injustices, or even reinforce them.

It is important to note that neither [Purpose-Driven Board Leadership](#) nor this matrix is intended to be used as a checklist. Each is a process and neither has a finish line. There is no perfect board composition, nor is any one person the sole representative of their race, religion, or neighborhood. The matrix is intended to help boards develop the perfect combination of experiences, skills, and qualities that are perfect for their particular board and that will ensure their board is engaged, representative, and inclusive.

## Worksheet A

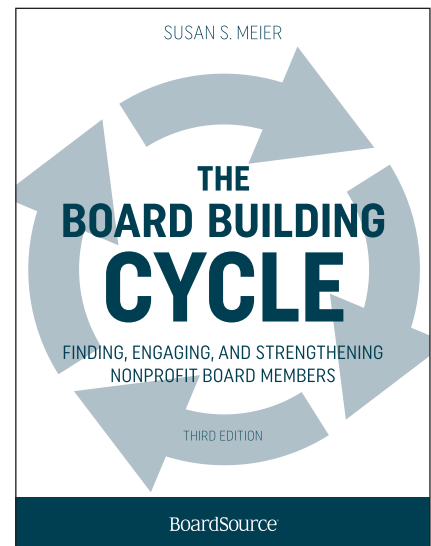
High-performing nonprofit boards are both thoughtful and intentional in creating a strategically composed board of directors. Composition ideally reflects diversity in gender/identity, age, race/ethnicity, skill sets, professional expertise, circles of influence, and personal and leadership characteristics. Every board's ideal composition should be considered in terms of the specific needs, strategies, and lifecycle of the organization, as the board looks forward several years.

Customize this matrix to reflect the breadth of characteristics and factors that you potentially wish to consider as you recruit new board members. To begin the process of identifying your board's current composition compared with its ideal board composition, please complete Worksheet A. All board members should check the elements that best reflect them in relationship to their service on this board. The completed worksheet should be submitted to the governance committee.

## Worksheet B

Customize Worksheet B to align with Worksheet A. After all board members have completed Worksheet A, use this form to compile the individual worksheets. Board member names or initials can be inserted below in Column 1, 2, and so on.

The governance committee should then compare the board's current skills, expertise, and diversity to the characteristics of its ideal board, and identify the gaps. Consider the impact of those who will be cycling off the board in the next one to three years. The list of targeted characteristics and skills can be prioritized according to urgency and value. The governance committee can present this analysis and its recommended priorities to the full board for discussion. Once finalized, this prioritized list becomes the guide for the board as it seeks to recruit new members.



EXCERPTED FROM THE BOARD-BUILDING CYCLE, THIRD EDITION, BY SUSAN S. MEIER.

# Strategic Board Composition Matrix

Board Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Years on the Board: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Term Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Age</b>	
Under 18	
19-34	
35-50	
51-65	
Over 65	
<b>Gender</b>	
Man	
Woman	
Non-binary	
Other:	
Prefer not to answer	
<b>Transgender</b>	
No	
Yes	
Prefer not to answer	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	
Straight	
Gay	
Lesbian	
Bisexual	
Queer	
Prefer not to answer	
<b>Race/Ethnicity (select as many as apply)</b>	
African American/Black	
Asian/Pacific Islander	
Caucasian/White	
Hispanic/Latino	
Native American/Indian	
Other (please list):	
<b>Access to Networks</b>	
Connections to community served	
Corporate	
Education	
Faith-based organizations	
Health care	
Media	
Philanthropy	
Political	
Small business	

Social services	
Other:	
<b>Financial Resources</b>	
Money to give	
Access to other potential individual donors	
Access to other resources (e.g., foundations, corporate support)	
<b>Qualities</b>	
Leadership skills/motivator	
Willingness to work/availability	
Personal connection with the mission	
<b>Personal Style (check the two that best apply)</b>	
Catalyst for change	
Consensus builder	
Good communicator	
Mediator	
Implementer/gets things done	
Strategist/asks great questions	
Visionary	
<b>Areas of Expertise (check the four that best apply)</b>	
Administration/management	
Advocacy/public policy	
Education	
Entrepreneurship	
Financial management: accounting	
Financial management: investments	
Fundraising	
Government	
Governance/nonprofit management	
Health care/medicine	
Human resources	
Knowledge of community served or the organization's work/field	
Law	
Lived experience	
Marketing/public relations	
Physical plant/facilities/engineering	
Real estate	
Social media	
Strategic planning	

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## Strategic Board Composition Matrix

Board Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Years on the Board: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Term Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

	Current Members									Prospects			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C	D
<b>Age</b>													
Under 18													
19-34													
35-50													
51-65													
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African American/Black													
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Caucasian/White													
Hispanic/Latino													
Native American/Indian													
Other (please list):													
<b>Financial Resources</b>													
Money to give													
Access to other potential individual donors													

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	Current Members									Prospects			
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Access to other resources (e.g., foundations, corp. support)													
<b>Access to Networks</b>													
Connections to community served													
Corporate													
Education													
Faith-based organizations													
Health care													
Media													
Philanthropy													
Political													
Small business													
<b>Qualities</b>													
Leadership skills/motivator													
Willingness to work/availability													
Personal connection with the mission													
<b>Personal Style (max. two per board member)</b>													
Catalyst for change													
Consensus builder													
Good communicator													
Mediator													
Implementer/gets things done													
Strategist/asks great questions													
Visionary													

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	Current Members									Prospects			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C	D
<b>Areas of Expertise (max. four per board member)</b>													
Administration/management													
Advocacy/public policy													
Education													
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Physical plant/facilities/engineering													
Public policy													
Real estate													
Social media													
Strategic planning													
Technology													
Other													
<b># of years on the board</b>													

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