

Scenario Discussion — Board Member Table

Board Recruitment, Skills Matrix & Responsibilities

Instructions: Work through the three scenarios below in order, about 6–7 minutes each. For each one, your table should land on an actual answer — not just a list of considerations. At the end, you'll turn your table's biggest disagreement into one question for the other group.

Scenario 1 — The Trade-Off

Your board has a finance expert, a lawyer, and three people with fundraising connections — but no one with lived experience in the community you serve, and no one under 40. A new candidate has exactly the connections you need but doesn't fill either of those other gaps.

Decide: do you recruit them? What's the actual trade-off you're making either way?

Scenario 2 — The Donor Who Doesn't Show Up

A board member has missed four of the last six meetings but is your single largest donor.

Decide: what do you do? And what does your answer say about what your board actually values — attendance, or money?

Scenario 3 — The Honest Ask

A prospective board member asks you bluntly: "What's this actually going to cost me — time and money?"

Decide: what do you actually say? How comfortable is your table saying it out loud, right now, to each other?

Table Synthesis

Which of these three scenarios caused the most disagreement at your table?

Turn that disagreement into **one specific question** you want the staff/ED group to answer:

Scenario Discussion — Staff / ED Table

Board Recruitment, Skills Matrix & Responsibilities

Instructions: Work through the three scenarios below in order, about 6–7 minutes each. For each one, your table should land on an actual answer — not just a list of considerations. At the end, you'll turn your table's biggest disagreement into one question for the other group.

Scenario 1 — The Overstep

A new board member, recruited specifically for their marketing expertise, starts emailing your communications staff directly with campaign ideas outside of board meetings.

Decide: where's the line between using their expertise and overstepping into management? What would you actually say to them?

Scenario 2 — The Gap No One Named

Your board has never done a skills matrix, and you strongly suspect if they did, it would reveal an obvious gap.

Decide: do you bring this up? How, given that recruitment isn't usually considered your job as staff?

Scenario 3 — The One-Page Onboarding

A board member asks you directly what their specific responsibilities actually are, because the last onboarding they received was a one-page PDF two years ago.

Decide: what's actually missing from most boards' idea of "communicating responsibilities," based on what you've seen firsthand? What would you build instead if it were up to you?

Table Synthesis

Which of these three scenarios caused the most disagreement at your table?

Turn that disagreement into **one specific question** you want the board group to answer:
