



PHILIPPINE CENTER of Ventura County

(A NON-PROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT, CALIFORNIA CORPORATION)

www.philcenter.org

CHAIRMAN...

FEB 2011

CHAIRMAN...

SAYING YES TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD*

*"It is not difficult to find members,
but difficult to find committed
members. It seems that
everyone's plate is full"
(by a chief executive)*

The decision to serve as a board chair does not come lightly, but requires serious self-reflections. Before stepping into the position, you probably will give much thought to what this decision will mean for you, your significant others, the community, and the organization.

The role of the board chair is deliberate, focused and action-oriented, and it is driven by personal passion, commitment, motivation, and leadership.

The time commitment is considerable. Building individual capacity as a board chair begins with discussing the job with others, taking the time for personal reflection, evaluating your personal support system, and taking inventory of your strength and weaknesses.

On the average, board chairs spend twice as many hours per month on board work as do other board members. Because the job of board chair is so critical to the organization's success.

It's important to spend time finding out just what it entail. Whether you are a longtime board member or new to the organization and unfamiliar with the board, it helps to have discussions with several people inside and outside of organization.

Ask the current board chair about the time commitment; challenging issues that arose during his or her tenure; unfinished board business; the strategic plan; the board's vision for the organization's direction over the next five years; and the working relationships with the chief executive, board members, community leaders, donors and other community stakeholders.

Ask the chief executive about his or her expectations of the board chair and the working relationships; vision for the organization; personal goals;

and current and evolving relationships in the community.

Discuss trends affecting the organization; the challenges and opportunities it faces; how it compares to similar local and national organizations; and its financial health and development plan.

Ask the governance committee chair about current leadership needs; the qualities and expertise he or she thinks you bring to the board chair role; the reasons you are being considered; and the status of succession planning for the other board positions.

Ask the treasurer about the organization's financial health, funding sources and funding trends. Review the annual and audit reports.

Ask the major donors, funders and constituents about community perceptions and expectations of the organization; whether the quality and quantity of the programs and services are fulfilling the mission; and what community issues or trends may affect the work of the organization.

To our partners, THANK YOU! Together we will realize the dream



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CHAIRMAN...

These conversations will help you create a snapshot of the board chair's role as seen through the eyes of others. Such perspectives and experiences are important in acknowledging the connections between the board chair and others.

Think of this exercise as a way to begin shaping your own ideas about the work of the board chair and to identify areas warranting further exploration and possible change.

As a board chair, you will not necessarily follow in your predecessors' footsteps or accept what has been traditional practice. You will create a new path. As you consider whether to say yes, you'll need to evaluate what the decision to become board chair means to you and your significant others, including family, friends and professional colleagues, and how this new responsibility will affect your daily life.

A personal reflection exercise will help you see yourself in the chair role, decide how you will balance the job with competing responsibilities and evaluate your support system. Answering these questions will enable you to go forward with confidence and support and identify challenges to be addressed.

Take the time to discuss your thoughts with close significant others. Being a board chair is a major commitment, but it should not consume your life. Be cognizant of achieving and maintaining balance.

You can also use this exercise if you are already a board chair to reassess expectations against realities, check your support system, and reflect on your self care.

(from The Board Chair Handbook by Mindy R. Wertheimer)

BOARD OR STAFF MEMBER?

As you contemplate and finalize your decision to join and be a future member of the Philcenter Board or staff, you have to fully understand that the job is demanding and taxes your attention to its fullest.

You will join the old and new members, coming together with the same one purpose for the Philcenter bringing your fresh perspective and experience.

You will be individual in your voice, but will be part of one in your decision to move forward the goals and mission of the Philcenter. You will serve as the voice of those donors and supporters who truly believe in this project.

During the induction of incoming members of the board and staff, you will swear with your right hand to execute your duties of the position to the best of your ability.

Either be a board or staff member, you have to give yourself some time and ask, am I ready to execute the responsibilities and more than willing to take on the challenge of being one?

It gives you a chance to measure your ability to be of service for the Fil-Am community. It will also help you shape yourself to be a future leader and someday, will have a chance to be running the day to day affairs of our beloved Philcenter.

For whatever role you want to be, the responsibility is great and the rewards is fulfilling in selfless service to the community.

Disclaimer: Any error or omission is not with malice and intention. Your feedback is welcome.
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