

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Qualifications and Responsibilities

The Nominating Committee is asked to give between 4 and 7 names to the current Board of Directors as nominees for the new Board of Directors. We would like 6 names, but we recognize that in the short time you have, you might not find 6 who are qualified, willing and able. On the other hand, you might find more than 6, and so we have offered the range of 4-7.

THE ROLE OF THE BOARD:

Being a member of a non-profit board in the United States is a very serious and important role which is governed by law. If boards do not abide by the law, The Focusing Institute could lose its non-profit status. Board members take on personal liability; for instance, if The Focusing Institute were found not to pay taxes, board members (as well as paid executives) can be found *personally liable* by the US Internal Revenue Service.

The role of Board members is not so much to be "doers," but rather to set broad policies and maintain an overall view. Their job is to have a "balcony view" of the organization.

WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE ARE GOOD FITS FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Each member of the Board of Directors should have the following qualities:

- is a Focuser and a member of the Focusing Institute, cares deeply about Focusing as well as the Focusing Institute and takes seriously the work and legal responsibilities of the Board of Directors
- is skilled at speaking both heart and mind
- is sensitive to what comes from a felt sense level, waiting to allow a new insight to form and be fully expressed (but not talking beyond what is alive and relevant)
- knows when to be gracious in allowing decisions to move forward
- is pleasant to work with and personable
- is reliable; can be counted on to fulfill obligations
- is available to attend meetings
- is decisive, while respecting process
- enjoys the give and take of meetings; is patient and seeks consensus
- enjoys facilitating the work of others; does not tend to micro-manage; is content to accept the work of others and trust that they have done well
- is willing to raise tough questions when there is suspicion of misconduct, malfeasance or incompetence
- is comfortable fundraising for The Focusing Institute, including asking individuals for contributions
- is willing to be a public voice advocating for The Focusing Institute
- understands their duties as outlined in this document and is willing and able to fulfill those duties
- is proficient in English
- is committed to listening to the concerns of the community, but is also willing to make unpopular decisions
- is generous with their time, treasure and talent to The Focusing Institute

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Other qualities that are important for members of the Board -- not every individual will have all these qualities, but there should be individuals on the board who:

-Have experience on another US non-profit board.

-Have a basic familiarity with US law, sufficient to know when to raise questions. It is ideal to have at least one member of the Board of Directors who is a lawyer with a license in New York or Illinois.

-Have run an organization of a size as large or larger than The Focusing Institute; have been responsible for a budget as large or larger than that of The Focusing Institute.

-Have experience as a businessperson, as a manager, having hired (and when necessary dismissed) employees.

-Have experience in strategic/long-range planning.

People who are not generally good fits for boards:

-People who have a self-interest in steering the organization in one particular direction, or who have allegiance to one constituency rather than a loyalty to the organization as a whole.

- People who are diasfected, angry or "squeaky wheels." Having a person who is invested in reversing course becomes a drag on the organization and on the morale of the rest of the board.

- People who really want to be do-ers and therefore might wish to micromanage or might get frustrated by all talking with no action. Such people tend to be better suited to creating programming.

Note that it is **not** necessary that a member of the Board of Directors be well-known nor beloved in the Focusing community, nor a good teacher, nor an author, nor even a long-time Focuser, though some members might be one or all of those things. Many high-profile members of the Focusing community will be better suited to the Leadership Team.