

The Center for Nonprofit Leadership has developed a series of seven TIPS that you can use in a variety of ways: as a focus for a board discussion, a topic for a staff or board committee meeting, or an article in your newsletter. Please note that if you reprint any of the TIPS, you must include the appropriate acknowledgement and email us for permission at

Endowments are not expensive or hard to start. They can give an organization long term stability and provide new sources of revenue. But endowments can also bring criticism; some still have the archaic notion that nonprofits should operate on a shoestring.

10. Revisit. Begin every third (or whatever number works for your organization) board meeting and staff meeting with a ten minute review to see how board and staff are doing in meeting the plan's objectives and timetable. Adjust, if necessary. Don't worry. Sometimes I think that strategic plans should be written in pencil.

Create a strategic planning process that works for your organization. Hire a consultant full time or use a facilitator at key stages. Do it on your own with some support from a capacity building resource. Take nine months or finish it all in ten weeks.

But do it...and use it.

Remember, though, that the process is as important as the plan. With a successful strategic planning process that includes board, staff and stakeholders, your organization will flourish.

Tip #3

Board Committee Do's and Don'ts

The work of the board gets done in committees. Today the trend is to have fewer standing committees and to create committees as needed. Each committee should have an end in sight with specific tasks outlined in a timetable to reach that end.

To ensure that your board committees are working effectively, keep the following recommendations in mind:

- Hold committee meetings right before the board meeting. Committees and task forces need time to prepare and submit their reports to the full board. Board members need time to read through the material —otherwise the board may just rehash what went on in the committee meetings.

Tip #4

Nurturing Donors: A Wise Investment

A recent study by *Philanthropy Journal* found that almost two in three nonprofits say that recruiting and keeping donors is their greatest challenge. A challenge? Yes. But insurmountable? No.

When your organization invests time in maintaining its donor base.

- Design makes the email. Avoid a huge, one block paragraph; create short paragraphs and messages.
- Consider the viewer and the aging boomer. Use a font size and type that are easy to read.
- Press send and lose ownership
Do not become one of those horror stories whose personal email gets blasted