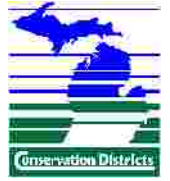




Training Module 12

Board Recruitment and Board Diversity



What You'll Learn In This Module

- | Ideas and methods to recruit District board members.
- | How the District decides what it needs in a new board member.
- | Why stronger boards strive for maximum diversity to achieve successful program development.



Discussion Questions

- | Why is it important to recruit diverse District directors?
- | What should the District do to prepare for recruiting directors?
- | List a few of the desirable qualities for District board members.
- | Why is it important to analyze the human resource needs of your District before beginning the recruitment process?
- | Why are job descriptions important to current board members?



The Need for Recruitment

- | Effective Conservation District programs are built with outstanding, and qualified District board members.
- | A District board whose members exhibit a diverse combination of skills will be better able to gain community support for District and local conservation efforts.
- | A board's diversity should reflect, to the extent possible, the population that it serves.



Recruitment Basics

- | Recruitment of District board members begins with the identification of qualities desired in current and prospective board members, and the definition of roles all District board members.
- | District boards then develop and use a variety of recruitment strategies to find citizens who have skills and interests compatible with the District.
- | Once found, these citizens are integrated into District programs and activities as elected or appointed board members.



Identifying Qualities of a District Board Member

Good District board members have a strong conservation ethic, skills and knowledge in conservation, as well as management skills and leadership abilities. Recruitment of potential board members begins with the identification of the qualities desired.

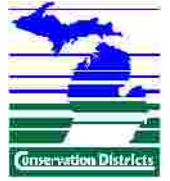
Board members should be selected based on the identified qualities and not on the criteria of “*who’s available that we know.*”



Identifying Qualities of a District Board Member (continued)

A partial listing of desirable qualities for District board members would include:

Open minded	Strong leadership skills	Innovative
Likable and kind	Professionalism	Understands conservation issues
Good speaking skills	Progressive	Always learning
Fundraising abilities	Personnel management skills	Legislative understanding skills
Leadership network in the community	Devote adequate time to the job	Ability to get along with others



Analyzing the Needs of Your District

Before you begin to look for someone to serve as a District board member, your board should first identify what the *human resource* needs of your District are.

This is an opportunity for your board to diversify and expand the membership of the District.



Analyzing the Needs of Your District (continued)

To find what your human resources needs are, ask the District board and staff the following questions.

1. List major programs and activities of your District
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your District?
3. What programs and activities would you like to do but because of the lack of resources (human and other) have been unable to accomplish?



Analyzing the Needs of Your District (continued)

4. Identify types of people that have knowledge, experience, or skills that can help you meet these accomplishments.
5. List skills, abilities, knowledge, and experiences provided by each current board member.
6. Who does your District serve? List your clients.
7. What new types of board members could help diversify your board, accomplish your mission, and better serve your clients?



Recruitment Prospectus

Recruiting board members requires looking beyond just your current circle of friends, relatives, and business associates. A variety of different local organizations should be invited to recommend a candidate based on your District's needs.

A recruitment prospectus should be provided to each organization you contact.



Recruitment Prospectus (continued)

In order to get people interested in becoming involved with your District, they need to know what the District does and the programs and services it offers. One way to inform them is to develop a recruitment prospectus which may include:

- **Mission and vision statements**
- **Your District's primary goals and objectives**
- **Major current issues**
- **Major programs and activities**
- **Funding sources**
- **Expectations of District board members**
- **Benefits of being a Director**



Board Member Job Description

In order to get people interested in becoming involved with your District, they need to know what is expected of them before they accept any responsibility. District board members are no different.

The more information you can provide them about their roles and responsibilities, the more apt they are to meet the expectations you have set.



Board Member Job Description (continued)

The job description should define responsibilities, duties, and obligations of District board members.

Developing a job description also provides current board members an opportunity to evaluate their own commitments to the District.

[Click here](#) to view a sample
board member job
description.



New Board Members

New board members need specific information to help them get “orientated” quickly. A variety of tools currently exist to help them in this learning process.

They are:

- 1) District Directors Handbook
- 2) District Operations Handbook
- 3) District Training Modules
- 4) Your Guide to Michigan's Conservation Districts – pocket guide
- 5) New Director and Staff Workshops - held each year



New Board Members (continued)

Other ideas each Conservation District can do to help new directors get started on the right foot include:

- | Partner a new director with a veteran director. This type of *mentoring* is very beneficial to both directors.
- | Provide the new director with individual training with the District Administrator/Executive Director or Chair
- | Develop an orientation manual specifically for your District.



Summary

- | Effective Conservation District programs are built with an outstanding and qualified District board whose members have a strong conservation ethic, skills and knowledge in conservation, as well as management skills and leadership abilities.
- | Recruitment of potential board members begins with the identification of the qualities desired and not on the criteria of “who’s available that we know.”



Summary

- | Before you begin to look for someone to serve as a District board member, your board should first identify what the human resource needs of your District are.
- | It is critical when recruiting Board members that you look beyond your current circle of friends, relatives, and business associates. A variety of different local organizations should be invited to recommend a candidate based on your District's needs.



Summary

- | Provide a job description to people interested in becoming involved with your District; they need to know what is expected of them before they accept any responsibility.
- | New board members needs specific information to help them get “orientated” quickly. Provide them with it as soon as possible.



Review Questions

- | Why is it important to recruit diverse District directors?
- | What should the District do to prepare for recruiting directors?
- | List a few of the desirable qualities for District board members.
- | Why is it important to analyze the human resource needs of your District before beginning the recruitment process?
- | Why are job descriptions important to current board members?



Resources Available

Resource Available	Where to Find It
Conservation District <u>Directors</u> Handbook	Located in each District office. Each Director should have a copy for personal use.
Conservation District <u>Operations</u> Handbook	Located in each District office
Your Guide to Michigan's Conservation Districts – Pocket guidebook	Located online at www.macd.org
Conservation District Training Modules	Located online at www.macd.org
Proud to Serve: Conservation District Board Members Recruitment Reference Book	Available through the National Association of Conservation Districts. Order online at www.nacdnet.org