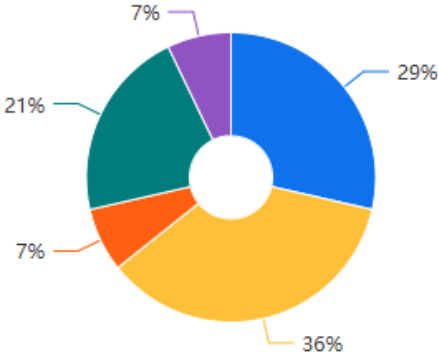


Member Meetup: A Smart Approach to Nonprofit Board Service

November 20, 2024

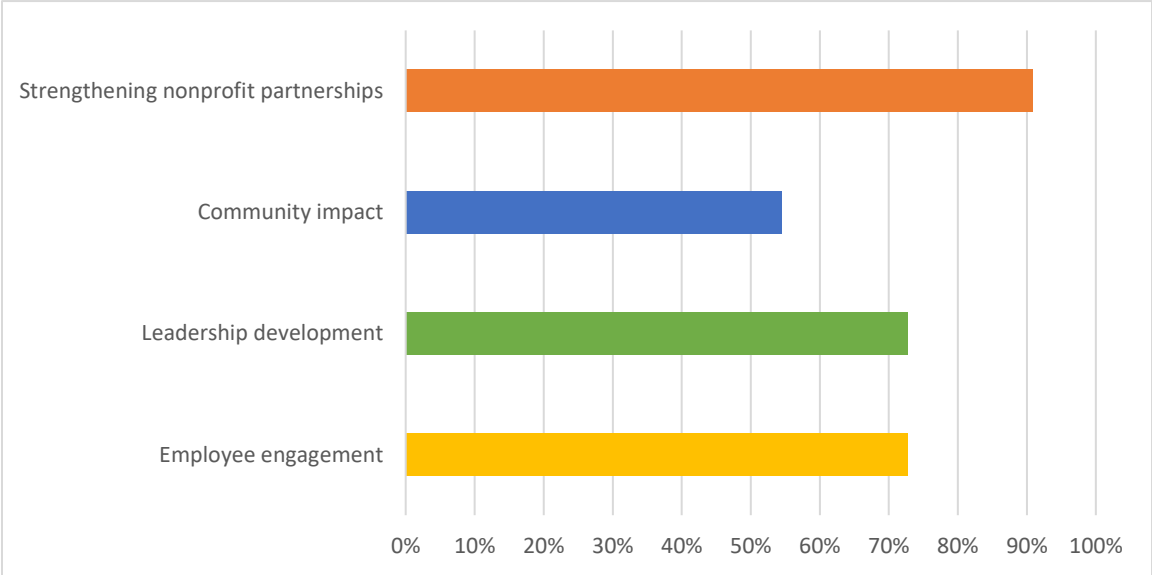
Polls:

1. What stage is your company's nonprofit board service program in?

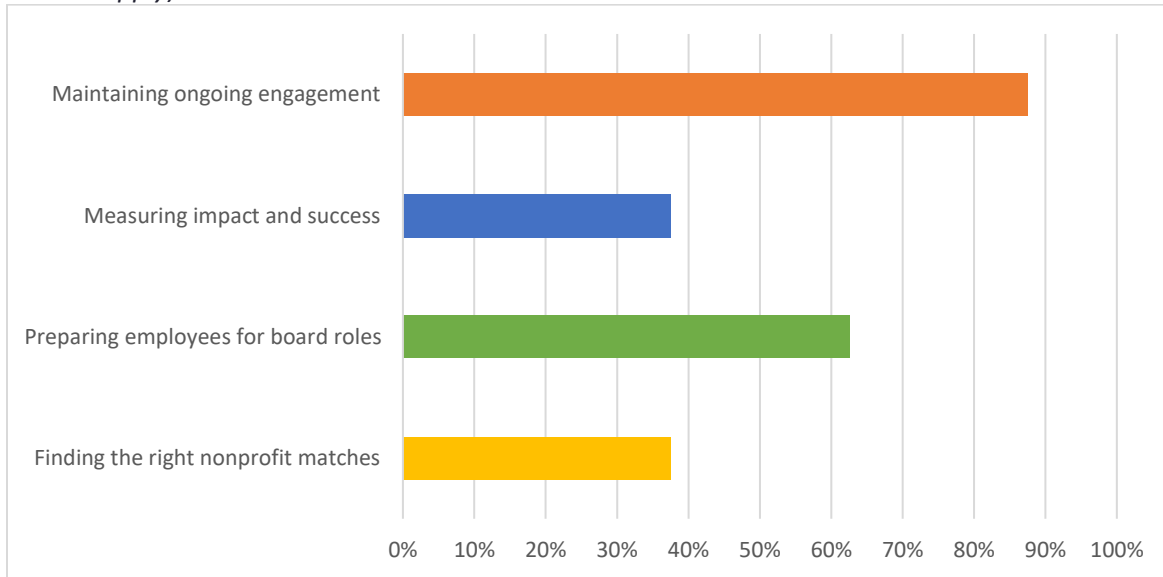


■ Just starting to explore ■ Planning phase ■ Established program (1-3 years) ■ Mature program (3+ years) ■ We do not have one yet

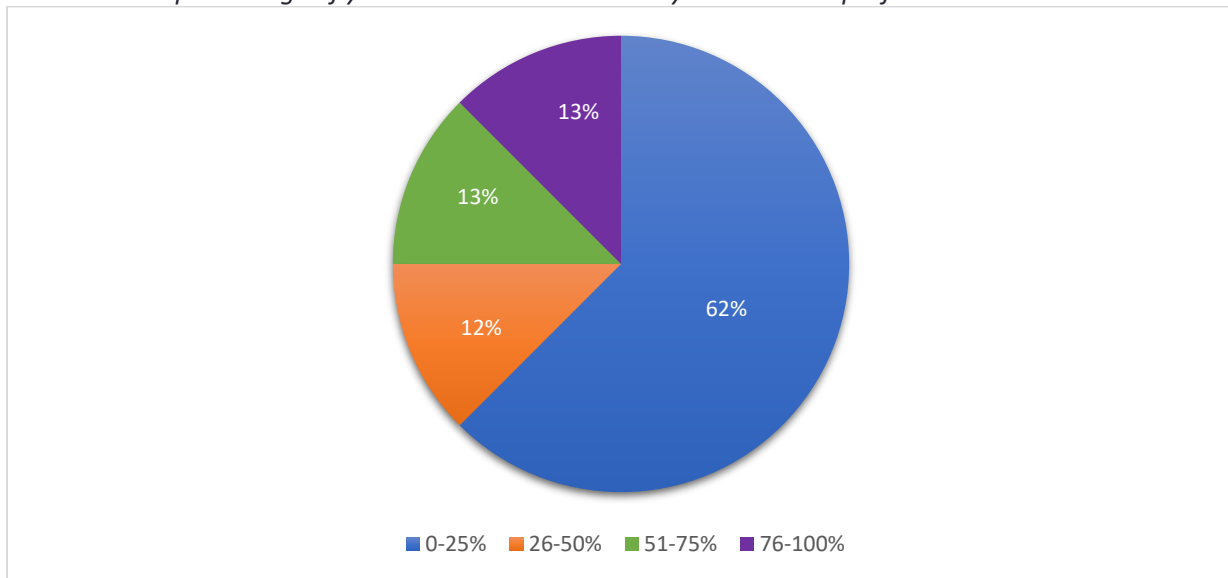
2. What most interests you about nonprofit board service programs?



3. For those of you who have a program, what challenges have you/are you facing? (Select all that apply)



4. What percentage of your senior leaders currently serve on nonprofit boards?



Background Information:

The November 2024 Member Meetup focused on strategies for developing and managing corporate nonprofit board service programs. Two organizations shared their approaches to connecting employees with nonprofit board service opportunities while building structured programs that benefit both the employees and community organizations.

One organization discussed their recently revamped board service program, which started with their leadership team and is expanding through the organization. They began by aligning board service opportunities with their company's vision and strategic goals, particularly focusing on environmental initiatives and community development. This allowed them to narrow down from over 10,000 local nonprofits to about 250 organizations that aligned with their mission. Their program emphasizes clear expectations around time commitments and giving requirements, with quarterly tracking of volunteer hours and careful matching processes.

The other organization shared their multi-pathway approach to board service, including partnerships with external organizations for training and placement. They developed a structured program that offers different entry points for employees, from local diversity-focused board placement programs to national matching opportunities. Their program includes comprehensive training, financial support for board commitments, and ongoing training resources for employee board members.

Analysis:

Successful board service programs require careful consideration of multiple factors, including strategic alignment with company goals, clear processes for matching employees with opportunities, and robust support systems. Organizations that have mature programs emphasize the importance of starting with leadership engagement to demonstrate commitment and then expanding throughout the organization. Training and preparation are critical components, ensuring employees understand their responsibilities and can contribute effectively to their chosen boards.

The presentations highlighted how board service programs can serve multiple objectives: developing employee leadership skills, strengthening community relationships, and advancing company diversity and inclusion goals. Companies are increasingly viewing board service as a key component of their broader corporate citizenship strategy, rather than just a volunteer opportunity.

Challenges, Solutions, and Strategies:

One significant challenge is tracking and measuring program impact. Organizations have approached this through quarterly reporting systems and clear metrics around volunteer hours and community impact. Another challenge is managing the matching process at scale. Solutions included developing vetted lists of partner organizations and creating structured processes for matching based on skills, interests, and organizational needs.

The issue of "give/get" requirements (financial commitments required by boards) was also discussed. Organizations have addressed this by being transparent about requirements upfront and, in some cases, providing financial support to help employees meet these commitments.

Actionable Steps:

- **Establish the Program's Foundation**
 - Define clear program objectives and alignment with company goals
 - Obtain leadership participation
 - Create criteria for nonprofit partner selection
 - Develop clear policies and guidelines
 - Establish tracking and reporting mechanisms
- **Create Support Infrastructure**
 - Implement training programs for board service preparation
 - Develop resources for ongoing board member support
 - Create systems for tracking engagement
 - Define financial support policies
- **Implement Matching Process**
 - Create vetting process for nonprofit organizations
 - Develop matching criteria and procedures
 - Establish clear communication protocols with nonprofits
 - Create process for handling give/get requirements
 - Build feedback mechanisms for successful placements
- **Measure and Track Impact**
 - Define key metrics for program success
 - Implement regular reporting systems
 - Track volunteer hours and participation
 - Monitor board member retention
 - Gather feedback from nonprofit partners
- **Scale and Expand Program**
 - Start with leadership engagement
 - Create phased approach for expansion
 - Build partnerships with external organizations
 - Develop succession planning processes
 - Create opportunities at various employee levels to encourage participation
- **Ensure Program Sustainability**
 - Build internal champion networks
 - Establish recognition programs
 - Regular program evaluation and refinement

Additional BCCCC Resources:

- Research Brief: <https://ccc.bc.edu/content/ccc/research-briefs/value-corporate-citizenship-financial-misconduct-nonprofit-board-service-improve-reputation.html>
- Community Involvement Study: <https://ccc.bc.edu/content/ccc/research/reports/community-involvement-study.html>
- State of Corporate Citizenship: <https://ccc.bc.edu/content/ccc/research/reports/state-of-corporate-citizenship.html>
- Executive Education Course: <https://ccc.bc.edu/content/ccc/executive-education/find-a-course/nonprofit-board-service-getting-your-team-ready-to-serve.html>