



A BOARD MEMBER SPEAKS OUT

Post your open board positions on LinkedIn — it works!

Wary of recruiting board members through LinkedIn? Chris Carlton, chair of the board development committee at the American Red Cross of Silicon Valley (ARCSV), shares her positive experience with the service.

Why did you post your open board position on LinkedIn?

One of our board members, a social media strategist with LinkedIn, introduced us to the concept as it was being introduced and as our executive director and board development committee was looking for alternatives to augment our traditional board recruiting process. We had tapped out the resources we knew best — our current board members — and were having trouble identifying candidates and cold calling. Drum roll: Enter LinkedIn board member postings!

What position were you recruiting for and how did go about writing the position description?

Every effective search starts with identifying and writing a comprehensive job description. It allows you to identify the key attributes and talents needed to fill a position and gives the applicant insight into the position, requirements and job responsibilities. In preparing to run the posting, we found our board position description wasn't job posting-ready. But by working through the LinkedIn board posting form, we were able to clarify and be more specific in expressing what qualities and experience were necessary to be an effective ARCSV board member.

What skillsets were missing from your board? What role were you looking to fill?

We were looking for a board member who is passionate about the mission of the Red Cross, who is willing to be an active and involved board member serving on one of three committees, and who would have the skills to be an influence leader for the Red Cross in communication or message and raising money.

What kinds of professionals applied?

A diverse and very broad section of the community interested in the Red Cross and preparedness applied for the position. While many of the applicants did not meet board member requirements or did not live in Silicon Valley, they were still interesting as we could introduce them to other volunteer opportunities within the Red Cross. All applicants had relevant work and life experiences to apply to the work we do at the American Red Cross. So in a sense, you might say, rather than pre-qualifying a person's interest by cold calling, board member postings did it for us by surfacing the opportunity, and those who were interested self selected. It gave us a rich and diverse cross-section of talent ranging from potential interns to community volunteers to board candidate. Also particularly appealing, the applicants represented our diverse community and not just the current board demographic.

How did you select your final candidate from the pool?

Most candidates were telephone-screened. Those who best fit the job description were interviewed by two members of the board development committee and, if referred, were interviewed by the executive director and board chair.

Has the candidate since joined the board?

Yes, we were able to find three candidates actually with a few others pending, and those three have joined the board.

How would you describe this new board member?

All three have been were amazing, and none of them would have been identified through our more traditional recruitment process. All brought a wealth of experience, contacts, and passion to the board. All were corporate executives in a broad segment of industries from start-ups to Fortune 100s to consulting firms. Each one is strong in strategic planning, fiscal accountability, and social engagement.

What have they contributed to the board so far?

One was a newcomer to Silicon Valley, and she has jumped in, contributing tremendously to our local chapter and also reaching out and adding strategic planning expertise to the broader region. Another is working to bring our social media reach to the 21st century, and the third is passionate about ensuring preparedness is a way of life in Silicon Valley. All jumped in to do the work that was needed, whether it be providing expertise in solving a problem, finding resources, or providing resources.

Resources:

[BoardSource Board Recruitment Center](#)

Note:

BoardSource members are able to post their open board positions on LinkedIn for free.

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