

Position Specification

Member, Board of Directors



The Client. Across America, millions of Americans want to support their communities by volunteering. But they face the everyday problems of active people—busy schedules, little knowledge of volunteer opportunities and lack of experienced leadership to guide them. Meanwhile their communities, and the agencies that serve them, desperately need volunteer support.

In 40 cities across the U.S., and a growing number of cities around the world, there are organizations that solve this dilemma. These local organizations, known as “Hands On” or “Cares” organizations, engage over 350,000 volunteers each year. Every day these organizations:

- Connect volunteers to the agencies that need them most, and provide people with volunteer opportunities to fit their interests and schedules;
- Lead hundreds of service projects that directly help their communities;
- Ensure they volunteer again and again by providing ongoing support for volunteers, including education, impact measurement and motivational events.

Hands On Network (www.HandsOnNetwork.org) was formed in 1992 as the umbrella organization for these local groups. Twelve years later, the Network is clearly “transforming people and communities through volunteer services and civic engagement.” Headquartered in Atlanta and governed by a national board, Hands On Network has three primary goals:

- Grow the network of local organizations so that every community has an effective volunteer organization to connect active citizens with the people and agencies that need them, and incubate new local affiliates with financial and technical support;
- Promote sharing of ideas and best practices among local affiliate organizations, so that every local organization can maximize its volunteer impact with superb technology, program ideas and know-how;
- Provide public policy leadership at the national level, and publicize the importance of volunteerism to political and corporate leaders – and to the American public – so that their policies and actions support community service.

The Opportunity. At this exceptionally exciting time in the development and expansion of Hands On Network, the board of directors seeks a small number—three to four—seasoned leaders who can help the organization realize its bold ambitions. Spurred on by a number of important strategic partnerships solidified within the past year, the current board is committed to strengthening the organization by adding new board members who will provide valuable new perspectives and leverage additional resources for Hands On Network.

The satisfaction to be derived from Hands On board service flows from the impact that the expanding number of affiliates is having on their communities every day. Hands On Network is truly transforming people and communities through volunteer service and civic engagement.

The Board. The Network is governed by a nonpartisan board of senior leaders from the corporate, civic, nonprofit and public policy communities including leadership from member affiliates. Most Hands On board members have experience as leaders or board members of organizations with significant reach and impact of their own. All board members are in a position to leverage substantial resources—financial and otherwise—to support the work of the network, and each member functions as an ambassador for the Network and the movement.

The Hands On Network governing board has five principal governance responsibilities: Strategy direction, resource development, stewardship, management support and effective oversight of its own governance processes

These five elements support one another as follows:



Each Hands On Network board member is committed to the financial health of the organization. Board members fulfill this commitment by making a meaningful personal financial contribution to the Network and by working with the development staff on an individual fundraising plan to can help generate additional resources.

Board Meetings. The Hands On board meets in person three times a year, in late February/early March at the annual Hands On Network Leadership Conference, and in June and November. In addition, a board conference call is held each September to finalize the annual operating plan and budget for the following year. The next board meeting will be held in conjunction with the 2005 Leadership Conference, to be held in Portland, Oregon, March 3-5, 2005.

Board Committees. Much of the work of the board is conducted through standing committees and task forces:

- **Executive Committee:** Empowered to act on behalf of the Board between regular meetings and charged with maintaining the organization's strategic focus.

- **Audit & Finance:** Compliance; financial oversight and reporting; risk management
- **Governance:** Board planning, recruitment, development, and board evaluation
- **Membership:** Affiliate expansion and support
- **Resource Development:** Fundraising, strategic partnerships and collaborations
- **Time-limited Task Forces** on selected issues of strategic consequence. Presently, there is one task force; it is charged with examining the Network's governance structure to ensure the best collective use of the wisdom represented by leadership of the affiliates.

President's Advisory Council. The work of the governing board is supported and informed by the President's Advisory Council, a new body created by the board in 2004.

The President's Advisory Council is the network's primary link with the senior corporate community; members are chosen for their commitment to volunteer efforts nationwide and their capacity to promote those efforts. The Council is led by Robert Nardelli, CEO of The Home Depot, one of Hands On Network's strategic partners. Other newly appointed members include Jeffrey Immelt, CEO of General Electric.

This group of leading executives has committed to meeting several ambitious goals by year-end 2006, among them the following:

- Increase the volunteer efforts of US corporate employees by fifteen percentage points, as measured by the Center for Corporate Citizenship's annual survey;
- Champion Hands On Network's expansion efforts into five new MSAs; and
- Help double the number of network volunteers to 600,000 individuals.

The President's Advisory Council is chosen in consultation with the chair and president of Hands On Network. The chair of the council is a nonvoting member of the board of Network.

Board Terms. Board members are elected for a term of two-years. If re-elected, a board member may serve for up to six years.

Board Prospects. For most of its history, the board of Hands On Network has been chosen from among the committed volunteers and staff of local affiliates, and the link to the affiliates has been, and will continue to be, central to the Network's success. Increasingly, the national office in Atlanta is called upon to negotiate relationships that span many affiliates, issues and centers of influence. Accordingly, the board has recognized the value of attracting new members who will complement the commitment and working knowledge of current board members and provide additional leadership perspectives.

The governance committee of the board is therefore seeking to add three or four board members who meet most or all of the following criteria:

1. **Volunteer commitment.** All board prospects should have a demonstrated personal record of civic engagement, broadly defined.
2. **Leadership.** The ideal board prospect is currently in a position of national or regional leadership within a significant enterprise.
3. **Corporate responsibilities.** Because the volunteer sector is so well represented on the current board of Hands On Network, favored board prospects at this stage are those accustomed to senior corporate responsibilities.
4. **Entrepreneurial attitude.** Hands On Network is highly entrepreneurial and expects to remain so. Board prospects should be comfortable operating in such an environment.
5. **Fundraising experience.** The Network board is a fundraising board. In addition to helping strategize the Network's funding efforts, board prospects should feel comfortable making the ask.
6. **Skills & expertise.** Management experience in general management is always of interest. Leadership in technology, operations or finance would be an asset.
7. **Diversity.** The Hands On Network board is almost as diverse as are the communities in which Network affiliates operate. A commitment to diversity—in perspective and experience as well as in demographics—is central to the Network's commitment to communities.
8. **Geography.** Qualified board members are welcome wherever they reside, but to broaden its reach the board actively seeks new directors based west of the Mississippi. Prospects from the Midwest and West Coast would be especially welcome.

Conclusion. Few nonprofits have expanded as fast or as effectively as Hands On Network, and yet the organization's leaders recognize that the best is yet to come.

If you or someone you respect might have an interest in Hands On board service at the national or affiliate level, please contact us by phone or e-mail for an exploratory conversation and further information.

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