

What Makes an Effective Trustee/Trustee Board?



Knowledge – knowledge about the organisation, how it is structured and what it is set up to do is vital, as well as a knowledge about the reason for existence for the organisation.

Understanding – Understanding your roles and responsibilities is key.

Time – Time to give your trusteeship is vital. If you have been asked to be a trustee of an organisation but you feel stretched in too many directions it may be better for you and the organization to say no at this time.

Commitment to the cause – To be 100% behind the ethos of what the charity is set up to do is one of the key characteristics of an effective trustee. If you are not, then ask yourself why you are there?

Be clear about your motivations for being a trustee? Are they in the best interests of the charity?

Questioning nature – If something doesn't seem right to you about the running of the organisation then the chances are that it isn't right. Ask! It is your responsibility and the chances are that other people will be glad you asked.

Experience – experience of being a trustee for another organization is useful as is experience gained through a profession, through working in a particular field.

Willingness to learn – No one person on a Trustee Board knows it all and it is a changing climate out there in terms of charity and other legislation.

Enthusiasm & energy – This can wane if you have been on the committee for too long. New blood brings with it enthusiasm and often a different perspective.

Team player – Being a Trustee is being a member of a team. With this goes the pros and cons of team work versus individualism. Things can take longer, but for good reason!

Prepared to do your share of the workload – All Trustees are volunteers, often with busy work and home lives outside of their trusteeship. For this reason, it is important to share the load so that the burden of work does not fall to the same few.

Diversity of skills and backgrounds – The more varied, the better the blend. It is good to have number crunchers and process drivers as well as people with vision and ideas, problem solvers, decision makers and importantly those that just get things done! Which one are you?

Accepting of responsibility – You do have responsibilities. There is no point in ignoring them.

A sense of fun – Trusteeship is supposed to be rewarding and fun. Why else would so many people give up so much of their time? A good sense of humour goes a long way!

