

CRD Board Member Focus Groups

Summary of Focus Groups' Participants

Four focus groups of the 2009 and 2010 CRD Board Members were held before the CRD National Conference during the Board Meeting. A total of 24 Board Members participated in these focus groups. Only three of the four focus groups provided feedback regarding the demographics of the group so this summary only represents 18 Board Members. Many of the Board Members have been involved in CRD for quite some time and are very active.

Executive Summary Recommendations Resulting from Focus Groups

1. CRD needs to develop a Board operating structure, including a nomination process, clear roles and responsibilities, term limits for service, training and other pertinent information
2. Promotion of volunteer opportunities, including board of directors' service, is needed via multiple outlets and should include volunteer criteria and expertise being sought, a complete application process, a description of the volunteer roles and responsibilities, ways to engage expectations of service related to time and dollars, term limits for service, and other pertinent information.

Summary of Responses from Focus Groups and Detail Recommendations by Category

CRD Board

Strengths:

- Board Members perceive themselves as an excellent, committed Board

Weaknesses:

- The Board is too large
- The Board is viewed as a clique/club
- The roles of each of the Board Members are confusing and unclear
- The Executive Board is perceived as making all of the decisions
- New Board Members often feel overwhelmed by the structure and hesitant to share ideas
- Board Members are not familiar with a nomination or appointment process
- No minimum criteria to serve on Board

Recommendations:

- Develop term limits for Board Members
- Develop a nomination process for Board Members
- Develop an annual Board Orientation
- Assign each new Board Member with an experienced Board Member for them for the first few months.
- All areas of diversity should be accounted for when considering the make-up of the CRD Board (e.g. demographics, geography, areas of resource development, diversity in the type of schools (rural/urban; types of resource development programming; single school/district)
- Board Members have many expectations of the services the Board should provide; appropriately some roles may need to be directed to volunteer committees and the National Office. These expectations are: to represent the needs of the membership and ensure programming; keep members aware of best practices; keep the organization well managed, legally and fiscally sound; advocate and promote CRD to community colleges; create of leadership opportunities for CRD members; and represent CRD to other agencies / associations / organizations.

CRD National Office

Strengths:

- Exceptional staff
- Provides an array of services
- Responsive to CRD Members needs

Weaknesses:

- Website is difficult to use and navigate
- Board Members may put too much pressure on staff and consume a lot of their time
- CRD pays staff too low for the DC area, turnover may become an issue

Recommendations:

- Redesign and restructure the website
- The Board Members have many expectations of the Office including greater access to information such as: increase awareness of CRD to community colleges to increase membership; increase interaction and communication between Board Members; increase focus on outreach to members; reminders of whom to contact and for what purpose; and continue to provide updates "from the Hill". As appropriate some of these expectations may need to be directed to volunteer committees and the Board.
- Communicate roles of National Office to Board Members

Volunteering

Strengths:

- All Board Members currently volunteer with CRD
- Volunteering with CRD has positive outcomes on the Board Members' career

Weaknesses:

- Need transparency engagement for volunteers

Recommendations:

- A more comprehensive volunteer structure with year round volunteering opportunities needs to be developed within the regions and states to develop a strong volunteer base.

Engagement

Strengths:

- Board Members are engaged in other professional development organizations
- Board Members initially began to volunteer with CRD through a personal request from a Board Member or a listserv advertisement

Weaknesses:

- Engagement with other organizations were through application processes

Recommendations:

- Board Members need to develop new ways to engage members. Some of these ideas include: recruitment by Board Members; engage with other organizations; engage community college Presidents; add a checkbox to membership invoices; add a volunteer section to the website; and continuous requests for volunteers for large and small roles.

Miscellaneous

Strengths:

- Continue to always thank volunteers

Weaknesses:

- Not a lot of new programming e.g. social networking, fellowship development

Recommendations:

- Keep mission and purpose of CRD in mind with governance changes
- Find profitable programs and focus on these