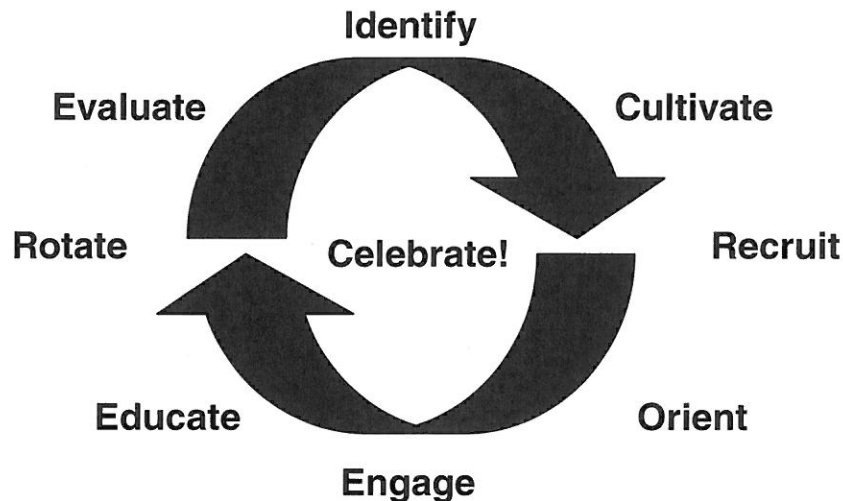


# The Board Building Cycle



**Step 1: Identify** board needs (Skills, knowledge, perspective, connections, etc., needed to implement the strategic plan). What do we have? What is missing? Identify sources of board members with the needed characteristics.

**Step 2: Cultivate** potential board members. Get them interested in your organization and keep them informed of your progress.

**Step 3: Recruit** prospects. Describe why a prospective member is wanted and needed. Describe expectations and responsibilities of board members, and don't minimize requirements. Invite questions, and elicit their interest and preparedness to serve.

**Step 4: Orient** new board members to the organization - program, history, bylaws, pressing issues, finances, facilities, organization chart - and to the board - recent minutes, committees, board member responsibilities, lists of board members and key staff members.

**Step 5: Engage** all board members. Discover their interests and availability. Involve them in committees or task forces. Assign them a board "buddy." Solicit feedback. Hold everyone accountable. Express appreciation for work well done.

**Step 6: Educate** the board. Provide information concerning your mission area. Promote exploration of issues facing the organization. Don't hide difficulties. Celebrate accomplishments.

**Step 7: Rotate** board members. Establish and use term limits. Do not automatically re-elect for an additional term; consider the board's needs and the board member's performance. Explore advisability of resigning with members who are not active. Develop new leadership.

**Step 8: Evaluate** the board and individual board members. Engage the board in assessing its own performance. Identify ways in which to improve. Encourage individual self-assessment.

**Step 9: Celebrate!** Recognize victories and progress, even small ones. Appreciate individual contributions to the board, the organization, and the community. Make room for humor and a good laugh.

Adapted from *The Board Building Cycle*  
by Hughes, Lakey & Bobowick, 2003