

## **Enabling** | **What volunteers should expect of staff**

Originally described in detail in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Strategic Fund Development: Building Profitable Relationships That Last*. Expanded and updated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition published by John Wiley & Sons in March 2011. This handout includes the expanded and updated enabling functions, fully described in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

Use these enabling functions to strengthen your fund development and governance. Use these enabling functions with your own staff, too.

### **Enabling functions**

1. Transmit the organization's values.
2. Engage volunteers in the meaning of your organization.
3. Articulate expectations and clarify roles and relationships.
4. Respect and use the skills, expertise, experience and insights of volunteers.
5. Engage volunteers in process as well as tasks.
6. Provide direction and resources. Explain why not just how. Identify and remove barriers, and help develop skills.
7. Coach and mentor people to succeed.
8. Transmit the body of knowledge and best practice, helping others anticipate next practice. (And this includes helping people distinguish between unqualified personal opinion and the body of knowledge.)
9. Communicate – which includes helping people transform information into knowledge and learning.
10. Encourage people to question organizational and personal assumptions and ask strategic and cage-rattling questions.
11. Engage people in meaningful conversation that produces learning and change.
12. Ensure quality decision-making.
13. Anticipate conflicts and facilitate resolution.
14. Encourage volunteers to use their power, practice their authority, and accept their responsibility.
15. Model behavior.
16. Manage
17. Create opportunities / strategies to buy more time to think things through. (Cohort 14, Saint Mary's University Philanthropy and Development Program)
18. Enhance attrition (and facilitate thank and release, if necessary).
19. Monitor, evaluate, and enhance enabling.

**Enablers have the right attitude. Enablers:**

1. respect and trust others;
2. are trustworthy themselves;
3. are comfortable with diversity and complexity;
4. welcome divergent opinions;
5. are flexible and comfortable with change;
6. commit to process as well as outcome;
7. appreciate conversation and disagreement;
8. share responsibility for success;
9. acknowledge responsibility for failure;
10. balance personal ego with egos of others;
11. persevere; and,
12. are patient.

**Enablers possess essential skills. Enablers are:**

1. organizational development specialists
2. proficient teachers and learners
3. effective communicators (listening, informing and helping to transform information into knowledge);
4. critical thinkers (anticipating problems, identifying solutions, and redirecting volunteer energies);
5. strategists (analyzing situations, identifying barriers and opportunities, capitalizing on strengths, and ensuring action and results);
6. comfortable with conflict and resolve conflict through shared power with as many individuals as possible; and,
7. effective motivators and can focus and manage people well.