**Utilize Your Career Talents on a Corporate or Nonprofit Board**

The lifetime of experience you've accumulated in your career doesn't become any less valuable once you've retired. Many seniors turn to part-time jobs, volunteer positions, tutoring, and mentorship to stay sharp, stay active, connect, and give back in retirement.

However, folks who have more specialized, executive-level experience might find the best use for their skills on a board. Whether you want to help a nonprofit you care about sustain its mission or steer a corporation towards an exciting new chapter, becoming a board member provides new leadership opportunities and new perspectives on how organizations operate.

Here are three questions to ask yourself if you think that serving on a board might improve your Return on Life in retirement.

**1. How much time do I want to give?**

Board members generally don't commit the same amount of time to an organization that a c-suite executive does. However, you will have to attend regular board meetings and be available to contribute to major decisions, such as interviewing and hiring key personnel. Board seats often come with certain social expectations as well, such as attending parties, fundraisers, and major community events.

If you don't want these commitments to interfere with your travel plans or coaching your grandkid's baseball team, you might be better off volunteering, consulting, or taking a part-time job with consistent hours.

**2. What does my resume look like?**

Most organizations are looking for board members who have more than just leadership experience. A growing nonprofit might be looking for a board member with a strong IT or social media background who can help improve online fundraising. A company that's investigating new growth strategies might want an M&A expert. Look for board openings where your specific skill set could have the most value.

As for your actual resume, the old Word doc that helped you land your last job all those years ago probably needs a refresh. Generally, you’ll want to keep a board resume short and highlight your highest-level responsibilities and accomplishments before retirement. Be sure to add any "board adjacent" experience you have, such as serving on committees or task forces. It also might be a good idea to let a friend, family member, or colleague who's successfully landed a job more recently review your final draft before submission.

**3. What are my specific goals for this position?**

Even if serving on a board will be less work than you were used to as an executive, board members have serious responsibilities. Additionally, you'll most likely be working with other successful, driven people, many of whom will have strong personalities and even stronger opinions. If you just want to stay active in retirement, there are less stressful alternatives to high-level corporate politics, painful hiring and firing decisions, and overseeing long-term strategy development.

Likewise, while giving back can be an empowering experience for retirees, giving back by sitting on a board might feel like just another job. Could it be more rewarding to step out of the conference room and volunteer on the ground floor, where you can interact more directly with the people this organization impacts?

Many retired executives also struggle with board positions because they just can't let go of the autonomy they had in their previous jobs. If you're still a CEO at heart, retirement could be the perfect time to start your own company so you can continue to work how you want, when you want, on the things that matter the most to you.

Depending on the organization, taking a board seat could also affect your financial plan, especially if the position is salaried or includes stock options. If you're thinking about joining a board, let's talk about how this position might alter your tax situation, as well as the transitions and goals we've plotted on your $Lifeline.