



Robert Madonna: A Corporate Leader's Perspective

As a partner and executive VP of Sales and Marketing for McCoy Enterprises, a leader in corporate education, Bob appreciates the need to constantly be learning and growing professionally.

Currently in his third career, Bob is studying for his Certificate in Nonprofit Management from the Nonprofit Center at La Salle University's School of Business.

Why would an experienced and accomplished corporate executive commit his limited time to enhancing his knowledge of nonprofit management?

"I've spent 10 years as a 'serial board member,'" Bob says, "currently serving on four different nonprofit boards." Speaking frankly, he says, "The average board member doesn't really understand what his or her role is. Nonprofits need to do a better job of both recruiting and educating board members."

Despite his extensive experience as a nonprofit board member, Bob wanted to be formally educated in the best practices of nonprofit management and enrolled in the Certificate Program to achieve that goal.

"The Nonprofit Center's classes have given me a systematic way of looking at things," he explains, "I've learned how things should and should not be done in a nonprofit; I understand the importance of measurement and evaluation and about the culture of nonprofits."

He adds that he's gained insight as a Board Member about how boards should operate and feels strongly that Board Members need to spend time at the organizations they serve and not just "meeting four times a year and concluding that things are ok."

"Too many individuals join boards for their egos and too many nonprofits bring on board members assuming they'll get money from them."

Bob is disappointed by the lack of board members who pursue nonprofit education to enhance their skills. "There's arrogance among boards that because they're been successful in the for-profit world they know everything they need to about nonprofits -- and that's simply not true," he asserts. He also values the credential of a certificate from the La Salle University School of Business and urges fellow board members to consider their significance in today's competitive environment.

Bob also invested in his Certificate in Nonprofit Management to prepare him for what he hopes will be a fourth career in the future – working for a nonprofit. And he plans to bring his same commitment to continuing education and skills development in the business world to the nonprofit sector.

Update: Bob, who is now President and CEO of Surrey Services, was recently appointed to the Board of Governors of the National Association of Nonprofit Organizations.



Deborah Binder: On the Front Lines of Fundraising

In 2009, Deborah Binder experienced a major transition in her role when she became development director for the National Shrine of St. Rita of Cascia, without any formal training in fundraising. Suddenly she was faced with responsibility for fundraising, including an ambitious \$1.5 million capital campaign, marketing and communications for the South Philadelphia landmark, which is being transformed into a center for conflict resolution, healing, education and spiritual growth.

A former education administrator with an extensive education that includes doctoral studies, Deborah fully understood the value one gains from “field experts and those currently employed in their professions” and decided to contact The Nonprofit Center during her first week on the job. She met with education staff and “immediately saw the benefits to the certificated programs and enrolled in both the Fundraising and Marketing & Communications certificate programs. If two simultaneous certificates were not enough, she soon added the Nonprofit Management Certificate, and within eight months had completed all three programs.

“My expectations were high from the start,” Deborah said of her desire to learn best practices in resource development, marketing, communications and all aspects of nonprofit management that were relevant in today’s world. I wanted to hear about current research, examples of methods and activities that were successful and to have knowledgeable professors who could discuss their work in relation to others who they considered strong in their fields. I wanted days filled with well-planned lectures, stimulating discussion, varied group activities, suggestions for future learning opportunities, connections to current technology and networking opportunities.”

Her high expectations were met: “I was thrilled and never disappointed with the professionalism and knowledge base of the instructors, the amount of worthwhile information, the locations of the classes, the attention to purposeful evaluations and the information offered. In those evaluations, and the incredible connections I was able to make with so many giving and experienced professionals who were my classmates,” she explains.

Deborah’s plans to continue to build on this solid knowledge base with additional classes as she continues with the capital campaign and other responsibilities, concluding:

“I’m a better professional due to the exceptional instructors and administrators and the incredible people I met in my classes,” she says of her experience with The Nonprofit Center.

Update: Deborah is now the assistant director of the National Shrine of St. John Neumann.