



About Springboard

What is Springboard?

Springboard is a program that brings together 10-15 experienced panelists from the private and public sectors to lend their expertise to a nonprofit by brainstorming on a question posed by the nonprofit’s Executive Director in a facilitated session.

When is Springboard?

Springboard sessions take place 4-8 times per year, usually on Fridays from 8-9:30 am, in locations throughout Maine.

How does a Springboard “flow”?

At the beginning of each Springboard, the facilitator frames the session and welcomes the panelists. The participating nonprofit’s Executive Director delivers a 10-minute presentation on a question or challenge faced by the agency, followed by a facilitated session where panelists brainstorm on the question.

What do I have to prepare for a Springboard?

There are two materials a nonprofit must prepare for a session: a PowerPoint presentation on the question that will be presented at the outset of the Springboard session, and a 1-page background on the agency sent to the panelists ahead of time.

How does the preparation process work?

Preparation consists of an initial meeting with MANP staff to frame the question and then outlining, developing, and rehearsing the presentation, with ongoing feedback and direction from our staff. The preparation process takes 5-6 weeks.

What kinds of questions work best for a Springboard? The question should be...

- Timely and relevant, and one which would benefit from outside expertise.
- Broad enough for substantial discussion but succinct to present in 10 minutes.
- Relevant to the business – marketing, HR, finance, operations, etc.

What should I expect to happen during Springboard?

- Be ready to engage in active listening; you’re there not to convince, but to learn.
- Welcome ‘ah ha’ moments as well some challenges from independent panelists.

What are required dos and don’ts of Springboards?

- Adhere to our schedule for rehearsing and producing materials.
- Do not solicit funding from panelists attending the session.

Program Impact

Our board members left the meeting feeling humbled by the opportunity to receive that depth of thoughtful reflection and support. We were buzzing with ideas, but revitalized and inspired. We have a long list of things to chew on and flesh out as we synthesize all of the great feedback we received, but this experience provided us with the direction and focus we need to move into Stage 2 of what we *know* is going to *change* the way we think about school volunteerism!

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- The Executive Director and at least one board member – preferably the Board Chair - must attend the session.
- Within a week of the session, write a “thank you” to panelists.

What happens after a Springboard?

The ideas coming out of a Springboard session belong to the participating nonprofit; MANP is available for a follow-up meeting at a time that makes most sense for the agency as they move forward with learning from the session.

Where can I learn more about Springboard?

Learn more and apply to be a panelist or featured nonprofit at www.NonprofitMaine.org/Springboard. Note that when selecting nonprofits, MANP members receive preference in scheduling.