



## Board Members Who Don't Do Anything

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I hear from a lot of homeschool leaders that they have board members who don't do much. How frustrating.

Do *something*. The problem is likely to get worse and a board member who is not participating can demoralize the entire board. But stay *hopeful*. Many board members need a reminder to be more conscientious. You're all in this together. But some inactive board members may need to be let go. They may be grateful that you've given them a graceful way to reduce their work load or even leave the board.

Here's some more advice from Blue Avacado's Board Cafe collection on strategies to deal with [board members who won't do anything](#) with a few comments from me thrown in

### Short-term strategies

- Check to be sure that expectations were made clear to the board member before he or she joined the board. "I know you joined the board recently and I'm not sure that you realize that we ask all board members to attend the annual dinner and, hopefully, to help sell tickets. Let me explain to you what most board members do, so you can see whether you'll be able to work on this with us."

*Here's a good list of [Requirements of Board members](#) to get you started.*

- Hold a board discussion at which expectations are reconsidered and reaffirmed. Agree on a list of minimal expectations for *every* board member, and ask people to suggest how they might individually help as well.
- Be sensitive to possible health issues or personal reasons why a good board member isn't participating as much as he or she has in the past.

*Remember, homeschool leaders carry a lot of responsibility. Your inactive member may be having health, marriage, or parenting problems that she is not sharing with you. Show grace and compassion and she may be so grateful for your support that she becomes active again.*

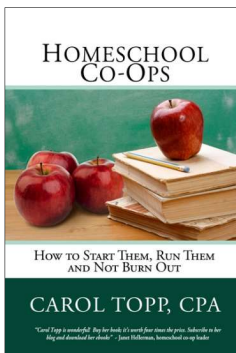
- Transfer responsibilities to someone else. "I'm concerned about finishing the revision of the personnel policies. Since you're so busy, maybe it would work out for the best if John took your notes on the policies and developed a first draft."

*The treasurer job is one of the most difficult positions to fill. If you need help with bookkeeping, contact me at [Carol@HomeschoolCPA.com](mailto:Carol@HomeschoolCPA.com). I have a list of homeschool moms who know bookkeeping and can help you remotely.*

- Together with the board member, explore whether he or she really has the time right now to be an active board member. "I'm calling to check in with you since you haven't been able to make a meeting in the last several months. Are you temporarily a lot busier than usual? We really want to have your participation, but if it isn't realistic, perhaps we should see if there's a less time-consuming way than board membership for you to be involved."

### Longer-term strategies

- Make it possible for individuals to take a leave of absence from the board if they have health, work, or other reasons why they cannot participate fully for a while. An individual can, for example, take a six-month maternity leave or a disability leave.
- Have a board discussion or conduct a written board survey on what makes it difficult for people to participate fully. "Are there things we can change about the frequency, day, time, or length of board meetings that would make it easier for you to attend?" "Are there things about the way that board meetings are conducted that would make it easier for you to attend or that would give you more reason to want to attend?"
- Consider whether board participation is meaningful to board members. Have a discussion with semi active members: "I'm sensing that board participation just isn't as significant as some board members want it to be. What do you think are the reasons, and what do you think we can do to make board membership more meaningful?"
- Revise what is expected of board members. Perhaps responsibilities have been given to a board member that are unrealistic for any but the super-board-member. Reduce the number of committees and utilize short-term task forces or committees instead. Redesign jobs and responsibilities to fit the ability of a busy achiever to accomplish them.



My book, [Homeschool Co-ops: How to Start Them, Run Them and Not Burn Out](#) also has helpful advice in picking board members, managing volunteers, and running a successful homeschool organization.

I hope these tips and suggestions are helpful!

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