

## My Expectations of a Co-op Director?

*(During the July 10-12, 2019 TACC Co-op Managers' Conference, co-op general managers were asked to write down two answers to the above question on an index card. What follows are the summarized answers from the participants and also eliminating duplication.)*

1. "Unconditional support" of the general manager in good times and bad.
2. The seriousness of confidentiality in the boardroom. In fact, it can change my willingness for transparency and the way I manage.
3. Taking the necessary steps to be an engaged director.
4. Loyalty to the effort and the co-op is paramount.
5. Having the where-with-all to seek out and learn their role as a director.
6. Initiate management goals, directives, and policy, then get out of my way, but do check on my progress as warranted.
7. To have the mental toughness to drop a sense of independence and replace it with a desire for the fulfillment of the group/the co-op.
8. Have a sincere and genuine interest in vision and strategic thinking.
9. Take an interest in helping the board president/chair in managing other directors and the team.
10. Reach out a compassionate helping hand to the CEO when they are in the middle of a tough decision.
11. Once a decision is reached by the board, support it openly and always, whether you agree with it or not.
12. Create a "want to spirit" within yourself to engage in frequent educational and refresher opportunities.
13. Ask questions when appropriate, but remove yourself from operational and employee-related issues. You only have responsibility over one person and that is the general manager.
14. Do those things to create a "visionary" mindset for the organization rather than an operational one.
15. Frequently remind yourself and create a picture of "What does a leader look like?", then carry yourself in that fashion.
16. To represent and genuinely promote the co-op business model.
17. Look at your role as one "to provide oversight to the co-op."
18. As a director, constantly remember to wear the co-op hat--not ruling on issues that are in the best interest of your farm.
19. Be willing to be "managed" by the board president/chair.
20. As a director, it is expected for you to be the "eyes and ears" to what's happening in the country and convey it to the other appropriate people.
21. Take seriously the urgency and respect necessary for board meeting attendance.
22. In the way you ask questions and support measures in the co-op, let your personality reflect a "team-player" attitude.
23. Although others tend to supply the effort, it is your responsibility to educate yourself about the co-op.
24. Never go into a board meeting unprepared. Make it a point to be so engaged that you walk into the room with a higher step in your walk.
25. There should always be a fear of micro-managing as a director, but at the same time, it's also okay and good to ask hard questions about what's going on in the co-op.
26. Because I am CEO, don't give me feedback I want to hear, give me "honest" input.