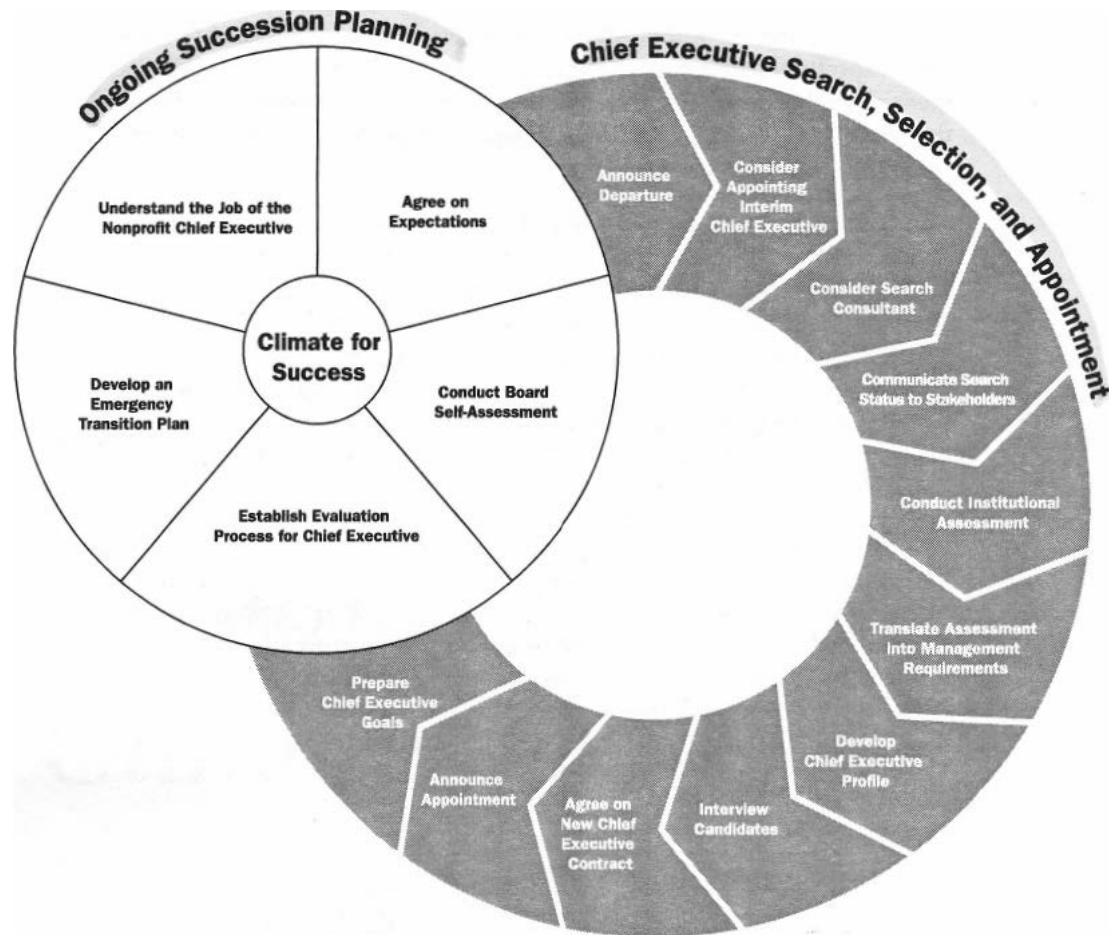


The Nuts & Bolts of Leadership Transition

National Network to End Domestic Violence

Colleen Campbell Bozard

The Executive Search



Change vs. Transition

- **Change:** the act of making a situation different. Change usually starts with an announcement and has a target date.

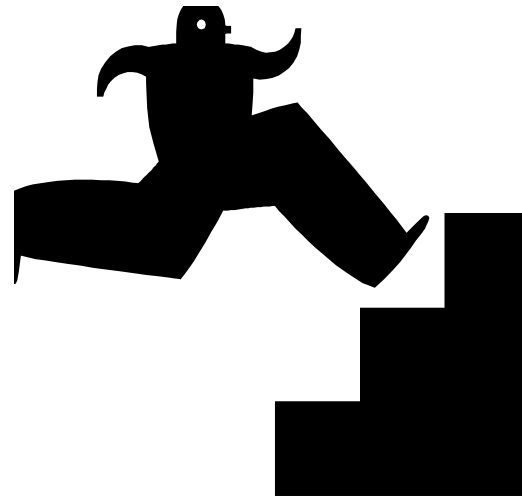
In order for change to actually occur, must have transition

- **Transition:** the journey from one identity to another. Does not work on dates or timeframes - it is something that must occur internally, in the hearts and minds of those affected by the change.

Phases of Transition

Transitions involve three stages:

- **Endings**
- **Neutral Zones**
- **Beginnings.**



Phase One - Endings

- ❑ All parties exchange goodbyes and appreciations.
- ❑ Employees mourn former leader and “how things used to be”
- ❑ People are waiting for the next "ax" to fall
- ❑ The "gossip mill" runs rampant
- ❑ Employees' self esteem suffers
- ❑ Many may need to work through feelings of loss or anger

Phase Two – Neutral Zone

A time of organizational vulnerability – and a period of heightened opportunity

- ❑ Systems and culture become a bit unglued.
- ❑ Employees feel "immobilized"
- ❑ Less productivity and increased absenteeism
- ❑ Anxiety rises and motivation falls
- ❑ Old weaknesses or problems re-emerge
- ❑ Priorities are confused - information is miscommunicated
- ❑ Teamwork among employees breaks down
- ❑ Loyalty to the organization suffers



The Transition Committee

- ❑ Arrange a proper send-off for departing ED.
- ❑ Establish a consistent message about the departure and transition.
- ❑ Determine what work the organization needs to do to prepare for the hire.
- ❑ Select, if needed, an interim ED .
- ❑ Decide how to conduct the search and screening process.
- ❑ Conduct an organizational audit to determine key challenges for the next ED.
- ❑ Plan a structure entry for new ED that contributes to future success.



Develop a Communications Plan

- ❑ Announce details of the departure
- ❑ Announce formation of the search committee
- ❑ Circulate executive profile to encourage applicants
- ❑ Keep people informed on status
- ❑ Formally announce appointment



Stabilize Daily Operations

- ❑ Who will be in charge during the transition?
- ❑ Can you continue to provide full range of services?
- ❑ Assure that books, records, information systems & physical property are secure & maintained.
- ❑ Review organizations systems.



Using Search & Other Professionals

- Consider hiring an Interim Executive to bridge the gap
- Consider retaining an Executive Search Consultant



Institutional Assessment

- Step back & reflect
- Determine where the organization wants to go
- Determine common view of priorities and direction
 - Survey stakeholders
 - Methods of assessment
 - Using the results



Assessment - Survey Stakeholders

- Present condition of organization
- Challenges looming
- Future direction
- Solicit input from various sources:
 - Board members
 - Staff members
 - Consumers/clients
 - Incumbent executive
 - Funders
 - Volunteer leaders
 - consultants



Aspects of Assessment

- Ask questions that will provide best appraisal of present condition and future needs.
- What will new executive need to deal with?
- Eight key areas
 - Mission
 - Vision
 - Financing
 - Governance
 - Management
 - Communications
 - Institutional culture
 - Other



Using the Results of the Assessment

Defining Core Leadership & Management Competencies

- Zero in on strategic imperatives
- Goal is to develop highly focused relevant and authentic list of qualifications

“Boards – don’t take the most qualified candidate, take the candidate that fits best and has the qualifications to do the job.”

Douglas Kleine, ED, National Association of Housing Cooperatives.



Using the Results of the Assessment

Chief Executive Profile

- ❑ The organization and its needs
- ❑ the principal responsibilities of the next chief executive
- ❑ the required leadership competencies
- ❑ the desired experience and qualifications of the candidates
- ❑ the compensation
- ❑ the procedures for applying or nominating candidates.

What to do with the Departing Executive?

- ❑ Board's first allegiance is to the organization, not departing executive.
- ❑ Extract as much information as possible
- ❑ Transfer relationships
- ❑ Acknowledge good work but focus on cultivating strengths of new executive



Possible Role of Departing Executive

- Ask the following questions:
 - Is the organization ready for this change?
 - Can the present ED accomplish the actions or does the organization need outside help
 - Are there internal candidates?
 - What could derail the success of a new director?
 - Are there unrealistic expectations by the board for the new ED
 - How strong is the infrastructure of organization – financial systems, policies & procedures
- Shift priorities to short-term actions



Develop Organizational Overview

- Prepare brief overview to be given to all candidates that are considered viable:
 - History
 - Mission
 - Review of agency size, staffing & operations
- Finalists should get more information:
 - Comprehensive overview of services, goals, needs & challenges
 - Annual report
 - Financial statement
 - Newsletters or other publications



Compensation & Benefits Package

- Salary
- Health, life & disability insurance
- Retirement program
- Vacation and sick leave policies
- Time off and funding for continuing education
- Relocation expenses



Recruiting & Hiring - Advertise

- Get the word out
- Cast the net as widely as you can afford to.
- Seek a diverse pool of candidates
- Indicate that salary for position is competitive (if, in fact, this is true).
- Require that applicants respond in writing and provide a resume
- Consider including an application deadline
- Secure commitment that insider candidate will be subjected to same objective scrutiny as all others



Screen & Notify Candidates

- Based on profile developed, determine who is not appropriate for position
- For those that appear to merit further review, send:
 - A cover letter
 - Job description
 - Required qualifications
 - Organizational overview
 - Statement on salary range and benefits
 - Proposed calendar for hiring
 - And application form if applicable.
- When screening, review education, professional history & other achievements

Conduct Preliminary Interviews

- Purpose is to reduce field of candidates
 - Assure that candidates can be measured against one another
 - Assure legal rights of applicants are maintained
- “To seek information other than that which is essential to effectively evaluate a person’s qualifications for employment is to make oneself vulnerable to charges of discrimination and consequential legal proceedings.” Equal Employment Opportunity Commission



Checking References

- ❑ When to check references?
- ❑ Must be sensitive to issues of confidentiality
- ❑ Inherent weaknesses in process requires a thoughtful approach
- ❑ People skills, initiative, follow-through, ingenuity, drive and technical or mission related skills.



Interviewing Finalists

- ❑ Interview by committee or board
- ❑ Staff involvement
- ❑ Making an offer
- ❑ Document the Agreement

Phase Three – Beginnings

- Successful launch of new executive and ongoing capacity building
- Employees want it to happen but fear it at the same time
- The ending is ratified and old anxieties may re-emerge
- There is excitement and renewed energy



Post Appointment Transition Plan

- ❑ Too many boards detach too abruptly
- ❑ Requires skillful blend of board oversight and support without micromanagement
- ❑ Requires staff proactive role
- ❑ Requires new executive's initiative



Welcome!

- ❑ Prepare staff for the arrival of new executive
- ❑ Introduce executive to staff and welcome him or her
- ❑ Welcome new executive into community
- ❑ Introduce executive to organization's partners
- ❑ Review the organization's programs, policies and procedures – consider formal orientation
- ❑ Advise executive of the challenges or problems facing organization
- ❑ Generally orienting the executive to organization and its culture.



Written Goals & Expectations

- 90 day work plan that outlines initial priorities
- Formal evaluation at 6 months
- Annual 12-month evaluation



Retaining the New Executive

- ❑ “Creating Climate for Success”
- ❑ Support, and provide funding for, the executive’s growth.
- ❑ Stay aware of the marketplace and keep the executive’s compensation package in line
- ❑ Maintain open, active communications
- ❑ Perform!



Tips for Incoming Directors

- ❑ Learn the organization
- ❑ Set Direction & Priorities
- ❑ Planning first meetings with board & staff
- ❑ Be comfortable admitting what you do not know and ask for support.

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Questions?

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