

Board Leader Succession Planning Toolkit

The list of steps of the Board Leader Succession Planning Process on this page is adapted from materials developed by the Society for Human Resource Management. This toolkit is a "work in progress" and so we encourage you to adapt it to meet your needs.

1. Establish a strategic plan (vision, mission, strategic priorities)
2. Evaluate current board roles/positions: confirm relevancy
 - a. List current key positions and incumbents
 - b. Will there be changes in the committee structure?
3. Determine the key leaders for whom successors will be identified (Review step 2a)
4. Determine how to use the results of the Annual Individual Board Member Self-Review
5. Establish a “line of succession” for key positions (see sample Board Succession Planning Grid on page 3)
6. Identify the competencies of current key leaders by completing a leadership assessment (page 4)
 - a. Determine process for rating current board members
7. Analyze board/committee roster for potential leaders
8. Evaluate value proposition for attracting/retaining new leaders
9. Select/engage the high-potential members who will participate in succession planning
 - a. Identify gap between what the high-potential members are able to do presently and what they must do in the leadership role
 - b. Create a development plan for each high-potential member to prepare him or her for the leadership position
 - c. Perform development activities with each high-potential member
10. Monitor progress/place new leaders
11. Evaluation

ABC Inc. Board Leader Succession Planning

Part 1 -- Review Board Succession Planning Grid

The Board Leader Succession Planning Grid results from completion of steps 2 – 5 on page 1 of this resource packet and forms the basis of next steps

Part 2 -- Leadership Development Assessment Grid for Incumbent and Prospective Officers and Committee Chairs

Each incumbent and prospective board officer and committee chair is asked to complete a leadership self-assessment. Using seven leadership competencies, the individual leader rates themselves for each of the seven leadership competencies on a scale from 1-5. (1=low to 5=high). After this initial individual self-assessment, a team made up of all or a subset of the Governance & Personnel Committee provides a group rating for each of the seven leadership competencies. Similarities and differences in the individual and team ratings are discussed and guidance is offered to the individual board leader regarding future development needs.

Part 3 -- Review of Relevant Committee Descriptions and Officer Position Descriptions

In the next step of the board leader succession planning process, incumbent and prospective board officers and committee chairs review the committee descriptions and officer position descriptions for those leadership positions they aspire to fill. They identify the skills and knowledge needs with reference to the relevant leadership position(s) They identify those that they possess as well as personal training and development areas in which they need to build capacity in order to perform effectively in the future.

Part 4 -- Personal Board Leadership Development Plan

In the final step of the board leader succession planning process, incumbent and prospective board officers and committee chairs devise a personal board leader development plan for themselves

ABC, Inc. Board Succession Planning Grid -- Sample

Part 2 -- Leadership Development Assessment Grid for Incumbent and Prospective Officers and Committee Chairs

Each incumbent and prospective board officer and committee chair is asked to complete this self-assessment. Using the leadership competencies listed on pages 1 and 2, rate yourself for each of the seven leadership competencies on a scale from 1-5. (1=low to 5=high). (NOTE: After the self-assessment portion of this form is completed, the Board Leadership Succession Team will assess the leader using the same rubric.)

Your Name _____

Board Officer and/or Committee Chair Position(s) you are preparing to fill:

Leadership Competency	Your Self-Assessment of Competency (1-5)	Team Assessment of Competency (1-5)	Comments
Leadership			
Initiative			
Judgment			
Planning & Organizing			
Teamwork			
Commitment			
Political Savvy			

Leadership Succession Planning Competencies

Definitions courtesy of The Leadership Architect®

Leadership (Rating 1-5)

- ◆ relishes leading
- ◆ takes unpopular stands if necessary
- ◆ encourages direct and tough debate but isn't afraid to end it and move on
- ◆ is looked to for direction in a crisis; faces adversity head on
- ◆ energized by tough challenges

Initiative (Rating 1-5)

- ◆ Seizes opportunities
- ◆ Enjoys working hard
- ◆ Is action oriented
- ◆ Not fearful of acting with minimal planning

Judgment (Rating 1-5)

- ◆ makes good decisions (without considering how much time it takes) based upon a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment
- ◆ most of his/her solutions and suggestions turn out to be correct and accurate when judged over time
- ◆ sought out by others for advice and solutions

Planning & Organizing (Rating 1-5)

- ◆ accurately scopes out length and difficulty of tasks and projects
- ◆ sets objectives and goals; breaks down work into the process steps
- ◆ develops schedules task/people assignments
- ◆ anticipates and adjusts for problems and roadblocks
- ◆ measures performance against goals; evaluates results
- ◆ can marshal resources (people, funding, material, support) to get things done.
- ◆ can orchestrate multiple activities at once to accomplish a goal.
- ◆ uses resources effectively and efficiently
- ◆ arranges information and files in a useful manner

Teamwork (Rating 1-5)

- ◆ relates well to all kinds of people, up, down, and sideways, inside and outside the organization; builds appropriate rapport
- ◆ builds appropriate rapport; builds constructive and effective relationships; uses diplomacy and tact; can diffuse even high-tension situations comfortably
- ◆ can quickly find common ground and solve problems for the good of all
- ◆ can represent his/her own interests and yet be fair to other groups
- ◆ can solve problems with peers with a minimum of noise
- ◆ is seen as a team player and is cooperative
- ◆ easily gains trust and support of peers
- ◆ encourages collaboration
- ◆ can be candid with peers

Commitment (Rating 1-5)

- ◆ pursues everything with energy, drive and a need to finish
- ◆ seldom gives up before finishing, especially in the face of resistance or setbacks

Political Savvy (Rating 1-5)

- ◆ can maneuver through complex political situations effectively and quietly
- ◆ is sensitive to how people and organizations function
- ◆ anticipates where the land mines are and plans his/her approach accordingly
- ◆ views corporate politics as a necessary part of organizational life and works to adjust to that reality
- ◆ is a maze-bright person (Maze-brightness is: 1) the ability to see the entire morphing, panoramic picture ("the maze") outspread before them; 2) then to identify the "GPS location" of their organization in that picture at that moment in time, and 3) to determine if and when to step left, right, forward, backward, or stand still as the next organization move.)

Part 3 -- Committee Descriptions and Officer Position Descriptions

On the following pages, review the Committee Descriptions and Officer Position Descriptions for those leadership positions you aspire to fill.

Note the skills and knowledge needs of the relevant leadership position(s).

- Which do you possess?
 - In what areas, do you need to build capacity?

Executive Committee Description

General Purpose

The Executive Committee is commissioned by and responsible to the Board of Directors to function on behalf of the Board of Directors in matters of emergency and in interim periods between regularly scheduled Board meetings. The Executive Committee shall have and exercise the authority of the Board of Directors provided that such authority shall not operate to circumvent the responsibility and authority vested in the Board of Directors by the By-laws, and any action taken is to be ratified by the Board of Directors at its first subsequent meeting.

Appointments and Composition

1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Chair, Chair Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Board and one at-large member.
2. The Chair of the Executive Committee shall be the Chair of the Board of Directors.
3. The Chair, Chair Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and one at-large member shall be elected in accordance with procedures set forth in the By-laws of the organization.

Responsibilities

1. Meet with the President & CEO to draw up an agenda for meetings of the full Board of Directors.
2. Make decisions on behalf of the full board as needed which cannot wait for the full board or on matters delegated to the Executive Committee by the Board of Directors.
3. Maintain effective communication with the committees of the organization.
4. Coordinate the annual planning and budget process of the organization in conjunction with the Finance Committee and the President & CEO.
5. Annually review the performance of the President & CEO according to the procedures outlined in the Personnel Policies of the organization. (The President & CEO, in turn, is responsible for the annual performance review of other staff.)
6. Respond to the call of the Board Chair or President & CEO for emergency meetings to deal with special problems between regular Board meetings per bylaws.
7. Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
8. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on same to the Board of Directors.
9. Report to the Board of Directors at regular meetings of the Board in a manner determined by the Board.

Finance & Risk Management Committee Description

General Purpose

The Finance & Risk Management Committee is commissioned by and responsible to the Board of Directors. It has the responsibility for working with the President & CEO to create the upcoming fiscal year budget; presenting budget recommendations to the Board; monitor implementation of the approved budget on a regular basis and recommend proposed budget revisions; recommend to the Board appropriate policies for the management of the Corporation's assets. The Finance and Risk Management Committee shall be assisted by the President & CEO. The Committee shall work in partnership with the Marketing and Fund Development Committee as needed.

Appointments and Composition

The members of the Finance & Risk Management Committee shall be the Treasurer of the Board who shall serve as Chair, the President who shall serve as an ex-officio member, together with other directors appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Board in accordance with the By-laws.

Responsibilities

1. Review, and recommend to the board for approval, an annual budget for the organization in collaboration with the President & CEO and Marketing and Fund Development Committee.
2. Also in collaboration with the President & CEO, review, and recommend to the board for approval and annually revise, a three-year financial forecast and long-range financial sustainability plan based on the forecast.
3. Review grant proposals when required by funders, and when necessary, recommend action by the board.
4. Review all non-budgeted expenditures over a set dollar amount to be determined by the board of directors and recommend action to the board.
5. Arrange for an annual audit with submission of same to the Board
6. Annually submit committee objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
7. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on same to the Board of Directors.
8. Report to the Board of Directors at regular meetings of the Board in a manner determined by the Board.

Marketing and Fund Development Committee Description

General Purpose

The Marketing and Fund Development Committee is commissioned by and responsible to the Board of Directors to assume the primary responsibility for raising grant and non-grant funds to meet the budget of the organization. The Finance & Risk Management Committee and President & CEO, in consultation with the Marketing and Fund Development Committee, will determine the fundraising goal for the Marketing and Fund Development Committee.

Appointments and Composition

1. Appointments of the Chair and members of the Marketing and Fund Development Committee shall be made by the Chair with the advice and consent of the Board in accordance with the By-laws.
2. The Chair of this Committee shall be a member of the Board of Directors.
3. Members of this committee shall be members of the Board of Directors, subject to the conditions stated in the by-laws. Additional committee members may be appointed and need not be members of the Board of Directors, subject to the conditions stated in the by-laws and any relevant board policies.

Responsibilities

1. Assist the President & CEO /Development Director in the creation and monitoring of an annual fundraising plan that will generate the funds needed to meet the annual fundraising goal.
2. Assist the President & CEO /Development Director in developing the necessary sub-committee systems to successfully carry out the fundraising events and activities that are part of the annual fundraising plan; assist the President & CEO /Development Director in supervising the sub-committees.
3. Assist the President & CEO/Development Director in developing a plan for involving Board members in the resource development activities of the organization.
4. Assist the President & CEO/Development Director in investigating new resource development projects and activities for possible future use.
5. Annually submit committee objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
6. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on same to the Board of Directors.
7. Report to the Board of Directors at regular meetings of the Board in a manner determined by the Board.

Governance & Personnel Committee Description

General Purpose

The purpose of the Governance & Personnel Committee is to build and maintain an effective, engaged Board of Directors for the organization. The Committee will establish and drive a continuous improvement process in order to help the Board and individual Directors become more valuable as strategic assets of the organization, contributing to ABC Inc.'s long-term success.

Appointments and Composition

The members of the Governance & Personnel Committee shall be board directors appointed by the Board Chair with the advice and consent of the Board in accordance with the By-laws.

Responsibilities

1. Review the structure and size of the Board and the Board committees. Periodically, review with the Board the appropriate skills and characteristics required on the Board in keeping with the strategic direction of the organization.
2. Identify and consider candidates for Board membership. On behalf of the Board, assess the skills and experience of prospective Board members. Present candidates to the full Board for consideration.
3. Review the institutional and other affiliations of directors and director candidates for possible conflicts of interest. Investigate any potential conflict of interest involving a director and make a recommendation to the Board for resolution.
4. Keep up to date on developments in the nonprofit governance field. Annually review and assess the nonprofit governance practices of the Board and recommend any proposed changes to the Board for approval.
5. Plan Board education including new member orientation, education of Board members and Board retreats.
6. Plan training and education of the Board related to governance roles and responsibilities and with respect to bridging Board knowledge gaps
7. Conduct assessment/evaluation of the Board, the Board Chair, individual directors, including each director's self-assessment, and Board meetings/sessions
8. Evaluate and monitor governance structures and processes, including policy development and processes for Board monitoring/oversight of operations.
9. Identify leadership development opportunities for existing and potential Board members to maximize member's contributions.
10. Report to the Board of Directors at regular Board meetings in a manner determined by the Board.
11. Annually submit committee objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
12. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on same to the Board of Directors.
13. Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.

Committee Chair Job Description

Responsibilities:

1. Attend all committee meetings.
2. Call and preside over meetings of the committee.
3. Set the agenda for committee meetings with the President & CEO or designated staff.
4. See to it that decisions and recommendations made by the committee are recorded.
5. Report the committee's activities and recommendations to the executive committee or the full board.
6. Invite the President & CEO and board chair to attend committee meetings.
7. Work with the President & CEO and board chair to decide who should serve on the committee.
8. Work with designated staff as needed.
9. Delegate responsibilities to other committee members and encourage their full participation.
10. Evaluate the work of the committee with other committee members, the board chair, and the President & CEO/designated staff in alignment with the organization's strategic plan.

Part 4 -- Personal Board Leadership Development Plan

Guidelines for Leadership Development Plans

- Step 1 -- Know and identify the key board/committee leadership positions that attract you and for which you will develop.
- Step 2 -- Identify the skills and knowledge you must acquire with reference to those board/committee leadership positions. Develop learning objectives.
- Step 3 -- Design a board leadership development plan to achieve the learning objectives. The plan should specify activities, timeframe, resources needed, who will assess progress, etc. See next page for suggested format for your leadership development plan.
- Step 4 -- Execute the plan and follow-through with regular reviews and monitoring.
- Step 5 -- Evaluate the result and document progress or gaps. Discuss need for additional steps with the future successor.

Personal Board Leadership Development Plan

The following form can be used as a guide for preparing a written plan for individual board leader development. The form should be filled out by the individual leader in consultation with the Board Chair and President & CEO. Changes should be made as needed.

Board leader's name:

- Current leadership position(s) on the board and time in the position(s):

- Key future board leadership position to prepare for:

- Other future board leadership positions that could be considered:

- The board director's personal and professional goals that can be met through future board and committee leadership service:

Person(s) who will serve as mentor/coach to board directors if desired:

Leadership Development Objectives	Methods Of Development See list below	Other Resources Needed

Leadership Development Methods to Consider:

- Public training events and conferences
- Onsite continuing education
- Mentoring
- In-house training
- Self-study programs
- Inter-group leadership development involving board directors from other schools
- Committee job/task rotation
- On the job orientation and training
- Personalized individual coaching
- Video and audio tapes
- Websites