DEVELOPING THE CAPACITY OF THE BOARD CHAIR:
Solutions to Common Chair Challenges
Feb. 21, 2013
Key Topics of Discussion

• Executive Director (ED) Succession Plan
• Executive Transition
• Common Chair Challenges
  - Dominant Chair
  - Unskilled Chair
  - Non-performing Directors
ED succession planning is **not** about replacing the existing ED.
It’s about preparing the organization and developing its competencies for future organizational requirements.
2 Types of ED Succession

Emergency/Interim ED Succession Plan
- Developed by the ED
- Identifies the acting ED
- Approved by the Board

Permanent ED Succession Plan
- Developed by the Board
- Identifies competencies of future ED
Necessary Elements

1. Performance Review System
   - Identifying and preparing potential internal candidates for leadership roles

2. Assessing Candidate Competence
   - Identifying skills necessary for optimal performance in a leadership position
3. **Personalized Development Plan**
   - Specific development program based on assessment of competencies
4. **Management Support**
   - Commitment from senior management
   - Communication to all employees

Develop Leadership Talent Across the Organization
How To’s of ED Succession

- Identify Board and ED responsibilities
- Develop assessment criteria for ED recruitment, aligned with strategic plan
- Identify potential internal successors
- Establish Executive Transition Committee
- Define timelines for recruitment and selection
- Use external consultants as necessary. E.g. executive search firm
Older vs. Younger NP Executives

- Older leaders “live to work” vs. younger leaders “work to live”
- Younger leaders want more space/time out of work for family and friends
- Younger leaders want decision-making to be more participatory than hierarchical
Older vs. Younger NP Executives

- Older leaders are biased towards experience and knowledge vs. technical skills
- Older leaders are not providing career paths for young leaders

From *Up Next: Generation Change and the Leadership of Nonprofit Organizations*
NP Respondents <25 years old:

- 27% want to start their own non-profit (NP)
- 3 top pre-requisites to prepare for ED role were more of:
  - technical skills
  - external connections/networks
  - leadership capabilities
- 90% feel they’re underutilized
- 67% believe they need an advanced degree
Meet the 6 Types of Board Members that Give Chairs Nightmares + The Chair that Gives Directors Nightmares
# He Who Won’t Play by the Rules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
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<tr>
<td>Misses Board meetings</td>
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<td>Arrives late</td>
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<td>Comes unprepared</td>
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<td>Lacks respect for collective process</td>
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<td>Lacks understanding of Board culture</td>
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## Boardroom Bully

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Has personal agenda</td>
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<td>Fails to develop personal relationships</td>
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<td>Intimidates peers/staff</td>
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<td>Accustomed to not being challenged</td>
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<td>Overinflated sense of worth (low self esteem)</td>
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Ms. Know-It-All

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<tr>
<td>• Speaks with authority on every issue</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Poor listener</td>
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<td>• Must comment on every issue</td>
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<td>• Uses experiences and achievements to prove her value</td>
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The Constant Questioner

Characteristics
• Frequently asks questions to the point of annoying others
• May be trying to show he’s done his homework
• May have hidden agenda
• May simply have a curious mind
• May be trying to drive change

Strategies
She Who Loves to Get in the Weeds

Characteristics

- High maintenance
- Focuses on operations
- Requests lots of details and materials
- Fails to understand Board’s role
- Sees her job as watchdog
- May not have trust or confidence in ED

Strategies
<table>
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<tr>
<td>• Overly critical of new ideas</td>
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<td>• Glass is always half-empty</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Negative attitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Obstacle to creativity, change and growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sometimes are founders</td>
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What If the Chair is the Problem?

- Cannot run Board meetings effectively
- Cannot interact with Board members appropriately
- May display any of the “nightmare” behaviours

Strategies