



5. We Develop Leaders Across Our Organization Who Model Our Mission and Values.

We demonstrate our commitment to effective stewardship of our staff and board by ensuring representation of and leadership by those served. Leaders throughout our organization understand the unique business model of the organization, meaning how money is raised and spent to fulfill the mission and strategic goals, and make sure that promised results are achieved. We offer competitive staff compensation and benefits and provide systems and infrastructure that staff need to do the work. We invest in staff and board development, mentoring and support, and we intentionally plan for leadership succession to ensure staff and board growth and continuity.



NONPROFITS

- **Ensure that board and staff represent and partner with the communities served.** Reflect on representation and change culture, policies, and practices to ensure those most affected by work have significant, meaningful leadership roles.
- **Treat the board as an asset;** maximize opportunities for board members to contribute time, talent, treasure, and ties; provide opportunities for board education and evaluation.
- **Raise funds and budget for competitive staff compensation** and professional development; engage in ongoing and annual evaluation and professional development as a commitment to results, stewardship, and growth.
- **Create a leadership succession plan** and update it annually.

FUNDERS

- **Initiate conversations about leadership roles,** including how those served are represented in leadership, and support organizations investing in strong leadership and performance evaluation for growth and development.
- **Fund proposals and projects for development of staff, leadership, and boards,** understanding that strong leaders seed impactful programs.
- **Encourage budgets** that include healthy, competitive salaries and benefits **to support people delivering the mission.**
- **Engage in conversations about and fund planning for leadership transitions** for key staff and board, and support organizations with funding during periods of transition.

BOARD GOVERNANCE: In discussions, nonprofit leaders and funder representatives identified the importance of, and challenges with, the board understanding its governance role and that it is accountable for the organization’s operations.

“[I] prefer a visionary leader but recognize the need for organization as well as institutional knowledge preservation. There is a need to write things down, to share with people.”—Local funder representative

“Board members...play very significant roles providing guidance to nonprofits by contributing to the organization’s culture, strategic focus, effectiveness, and financial sustainability, as well as serving as ambassadors and advocates.”—National Council of Nonprofits

MYTH: Grow beyond the myth that there’s not enough money or time to invest in staff, and funders won’t pay for it.
REALITY: Investment in talent development is a matter of priorities and values that will pay off in staff satisfaction, retention, performance, and effectiveness; help funders who support your work understand the compelling case for prioritizing talent investments. See *Fund the People Toolkit: Nonprofit Myths and Realities*.

[Learn More](#)

[VISIT 7PRINCIPLES.THECNE.ORG](http://7PRINCIPLES.THECNE.ORG) TO ACCESS OUR LIBRARY OF TOOLS AND RESOURCES.



Do we discuss with nonprofits how the people they serve play significant and meaningful leadership roles?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A** **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps

Are we willing to fund professional development, leadership development, and board development?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A** **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps

Do we encourage and fund organizations to budget for competitive salaries and benefits, training and development?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A** **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps

Are we willing to fund planning for transitions of key positions to support healthy evolution and continuity, and to support organizations with funding during periods of transition?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A** **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps

Do we invest in our own leadership development and, if an institutional funder, do we invest in transition planning?

YES

NO

NOT SURE

N/A

PRIORITY: High Medium Low

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps
