

## Executive Transition: Some Questions Most Boards Ask

Your executive's departure may have just happened, or your director may have announced a resignation that will take effect a few months from now. Even if all parties agree that it is time for a change, most board members experience anxiety and fear the destabilization an executive turnover can cause. Usually, few have had to manage such a transition, and all board members – to some degree – are properly concerned they don't have the extra time and energy a turnover period can require.

Many board members facing CEO turnover, confront important questions and concerns:

- What's the best way to find the new leader we need?
- Can we afford to hire a recruiter or should we do the search ourselves?
- Who on the board has time to lead a search?
- Who's going to be in charge until the new executive comes on board?
- Will our programs suffer or funding opportunities be lost?
- How will the transition impact our donors?
- How do we reassure our clients and staff?

At this critical juncture, your agency may face other major hurdles as well:

- Would this be a good time to consider doing business differently?
- Do we need to cut a program?
- Should we consider collaborating with a similar service provider to share overhead costs?
- Does a corporate merger make sense?
- How can we delay an executive search to give ourselves time to consider these questions?

Managing nonprofits near the end of the century means confronting increasingly complex challenges for financial support, accountability, productivity, racial and cultural diversity, and workforce satisfaction:

- Could this executive transition period be a good time to re-tool to meet these challenges?
- What are the current hurdles our organization is facing that might determine the profile and experiences we should look for in our next executive?
- Does our board itself need some strengthening?
- How might the board improve its ability to provide good governance in difficult times?

Amanda works with boards to find good answers to these questions and map out the necessary steps for a successful executive transition, including conducting an organizational assessment; recommending strategies for an executive search; acting as interim executive; and board development and recruitment.

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