



A Survival Guide for the Executive Director

How can you juggle all your duties without burning out?

By Terrence Fernsler

The Executive Director's Survival Guide: Thriving as a Nonprofit Leader

By Mim Carlson & Margaret Donohoe. 287 pages. Hardcover. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, www.wiley.com.

The care of the executive director is important for the well-being of any nonprofit organization. In this book, Mim Carlson and Margaret Donohoe explain what executive directors can do to be more effective, looking at everything from organizational culture to proper monitoring of finances, from board relations to career development.

The authors describe the changes the nonprofit sector is experiencing, because executive directors must keep up with the trends. They explain the life stages of nonprofits and the skills needed by executive directors to prosper in each stage.

Executive directors must be able to determine who the stakeholders in an organization are and how to communicate with each stakeholder group. Executive directors are important in nurturing relationships with stakeholders,

and this book explains how to do so.

The executive director's relationship with the board is extremely important. There should be clear goals and no surprises. The executive director must keep the whole board focused on mission and not let it focus just on tasks. Broad representation in the organization means more than just ethnic diversity. The board should be open to representation by the whole community's culture. The executive director's role is to encourage diversity in the workplace and learn how to manage any diversity-related conflicts among staff and volunteers.

Executive directors must know when to lead, when to manage, and when to support or follow. They must also know the right people to follow. Getting along with staff, paid and volunteer, makes the organization more effective. Executive directors can share their expectations with staff and learn to communicate well to improve the organization. The difficult job of following the founder, and ways to keep the founder involved, are discussed at length.

The authors explain how to keep track of finances. Everyone has a role in fundraising, but the

executive director is responsible for creating a culture of a fundraising team.

With the many responsibilities an executive director has, it's all too easy to become wrapped up in work, but it's important to have a balanced lifestyle in order to be effective. Delegating can help ease an executive director's work load while developing leaders within the organization. Receiving coaching and mentoring can also help an executive director accomplish more.

There are many reasons for an executive director to leave an organization, but most of them are beneficial for both the executive director and the organization. The executive director should prepare for transition in the position, and this book helps with checklists to make transitions smooth.

The book takes all the issues that are important to the executive director's job and investigates the best ways to handle them, one by one. Taken together, they paint a vivid portrait of how to perform well without burning out, burning bridges, or burning the organization. ■

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What Sets Social Entrepreneurs Apart?

What makes social entrepreneurs different from business entrepreneurs? The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report found that women and people from ethnic minorities are more likely to become social than commercial entrepreneurs. Social entrepreneurs also tend to be more educated and financially better off. When it comes to the practical aspects, however, there aren't so many differences. David Bornstein, author of *How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas* (www.howtochangetheworld.org), notes that social entrepreneurs do the same things as business entrepreneurs and have the same skills and temperament. "They love to build things — not to invent a new running shoe, but to change the world." Social enterprise also fits neatly with the current business passion for stakeholderism, the idea that anyone affected by a business or organization has a stake in it. For more, see "The Not-for-profit Principle" at www.charitychannel.com. □