

Building Healthy, Equitable Organizations Through Succession Planning



PENN
creative



The Context for Boards

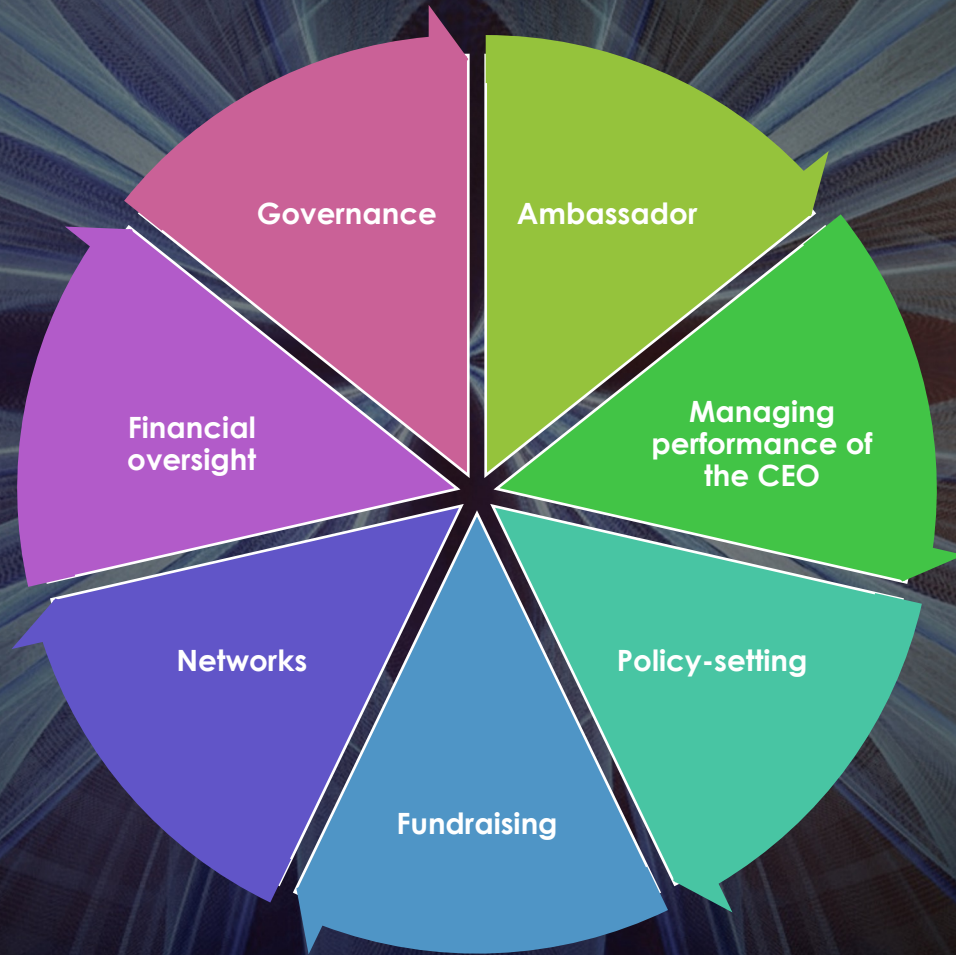
Board Job – 3 Legal Requirements

Duty of
Obedience

Duty of Care

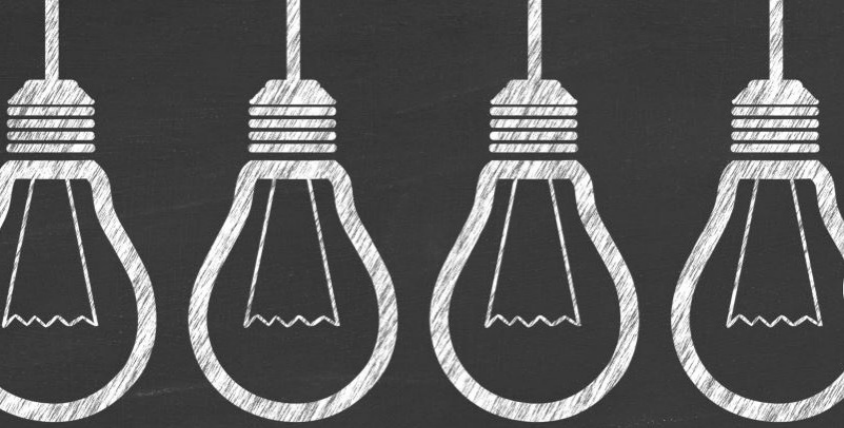
Duty of
Loyalty

The other roles we ask boards to play



A low-angle, close-up shot of a person's legs and feet as they run on a track. The runner is wearing dark-colored athletic shoes with a prominent, light-colored, grid-patterned sole. The background is heavily blurred, showing streaks of light and color, which conveys a sense of high speed and motion. The lighting is bright, suggesting an outdoor setting during the day.

Board Succession Planning In Practice



Why Is Succession Planning Important?

- Minimize potential disruption from unexpected departures
- Ensure smooth leadership transitions
- Plan for future leadership needs
- Build the board's diversity profile
- Continuously assess board performance
- Identify and address gaps in board expertise
- Assure new board members are aligned with organizational needs and strategic objectives

BEFORE YOU START...

By-Laws; The Rules of the Road

How many board members you may appoint

- How many empty seats do we have to fill?

How many members are a quorum

- How many people are needed to make decisions?

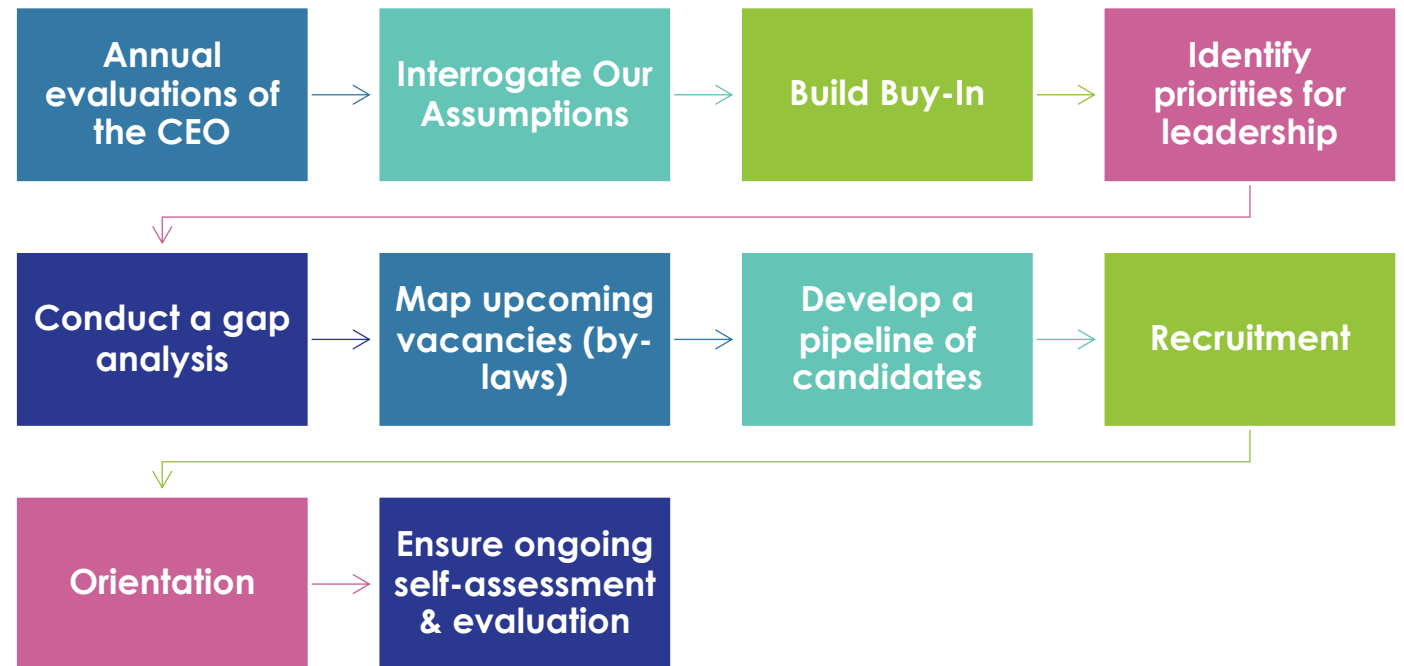
Officer roles

- Who is being prepared for leadership?

Terms & term limits

- How often will we be recruiting and can we anticipate when that will happen?

How To Do Board Succession Planning with an Equity Lens



Conduct Annual ED Performance Evaluations

- Annual performance goals (from strategic plan)
- Core competencies
- Leadership qualities (values)
- Accomplishments & challenges



Interrogate our assumptions!

“To develop the collective will to embrace diversity and share power requires us to invent new ways of doing, being, and relating.”



Board propensity to prioritize fundraising over all else must be challenged.

Boards looking for new members should consider intangible and non-monetary resources that prospective members can bring to the organization.

Build Buy-In: Five Questions to Get You Started



Is our organization's reputation being negatively (or positively) impacted by our board's current composition vis-à-vis diversity?



If someone were to make assumptions about our organizational values based on our board composition, what would they be likely to think?



How well are we cultivating a deeper understanding of the community or communities that we serve and bringing their perspectives, needs, feedback and priorities into our strategic boardroom discussions?



Are we ever at risk of making decisions without fully understanding how those decisions may affect those we serve?



If we were to make a deeper commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity, what would that mean for our mission, our work, and the people we serve?

Identify Priorities for Leadership & Do A Gap Analysis

What skills do you have?

What skills do you need?

What other considerations are important?

What kind of diversity is appropriate for your mission?

Develop a pipeline of candidates



Start with a checklist of desired skills and/or characteristics



Sources: Other board members, donors, volunteers, colleagues, community



Develop a list of potential candidates



Accountable group to research and CULTIVATE the candidates

Recruitment: Board Search Sites

[AboveBoard](#) - a new inclusive platform for finding board members

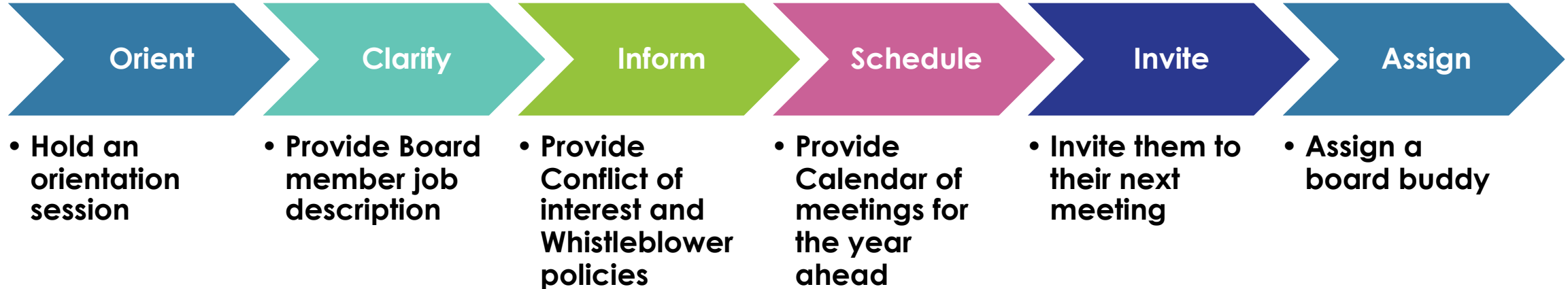
[BoardStrong](#) - Formerly BoardNet USA

[Board Assist](#) - board member recruiting and matching firm

[Cause Strategy Partners](#) - board member recruiting and matching firm

[BoardLead](#) - a board recruiting service run by Cause Strategy Partners

Onboarding

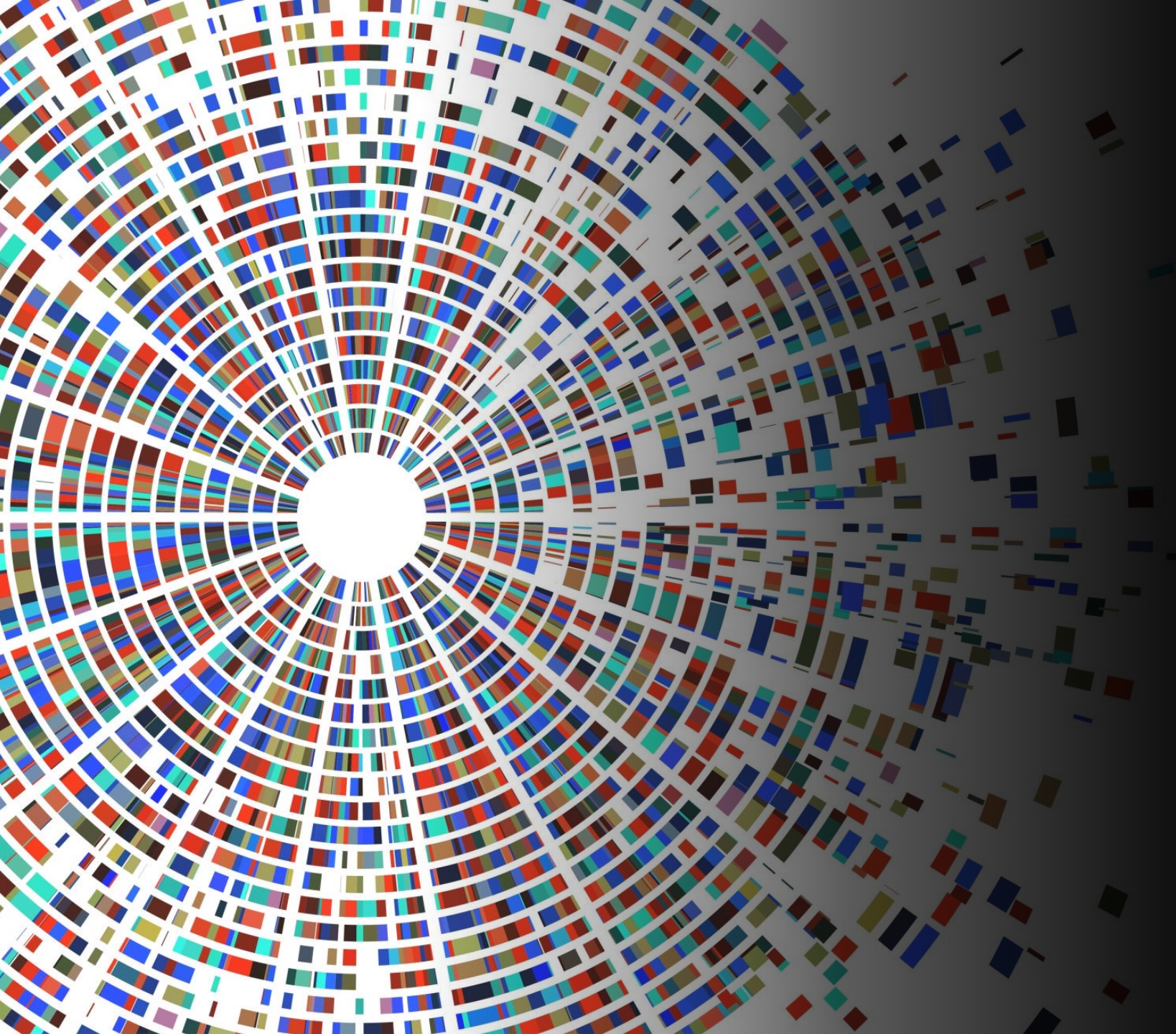


Ensure ongoing self-assessment & evaluation

At least annual board self-assessment

Upholding and ensuring mutual accountability for board performance

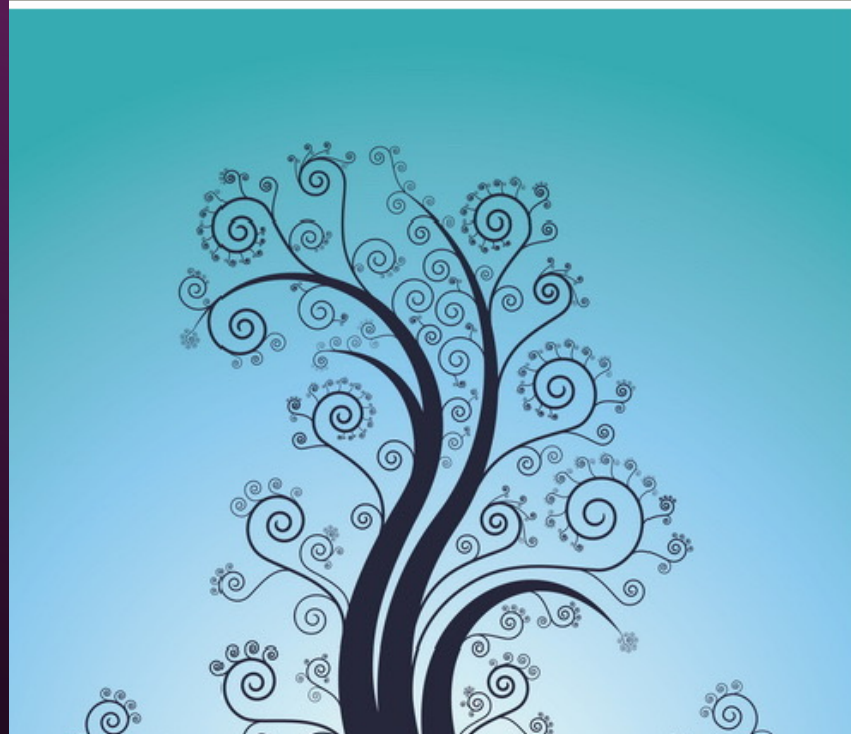
Evaluating and managing member performance



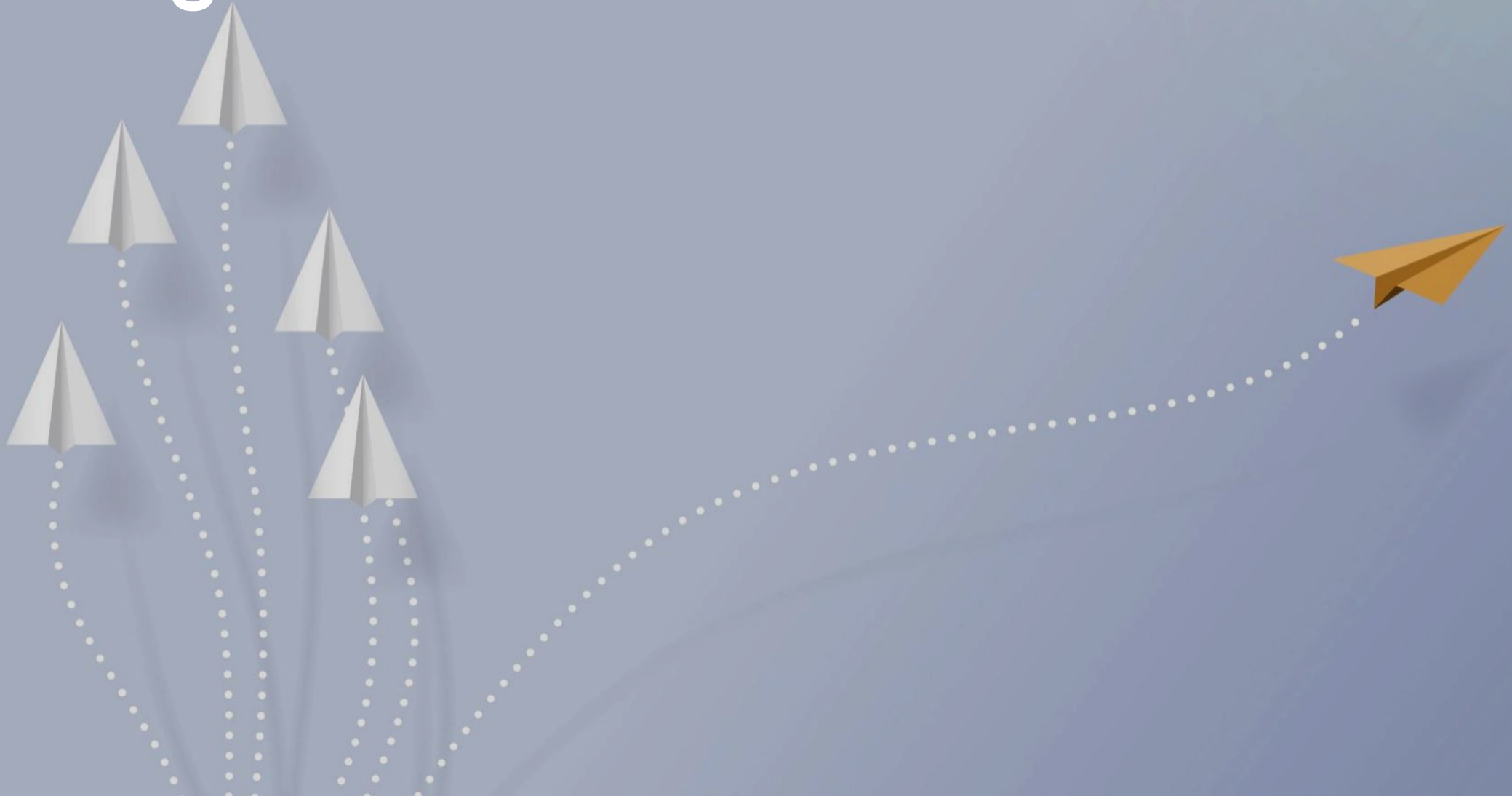
The Board's Role in Executive Director Succession Planning

The Context for Leadership

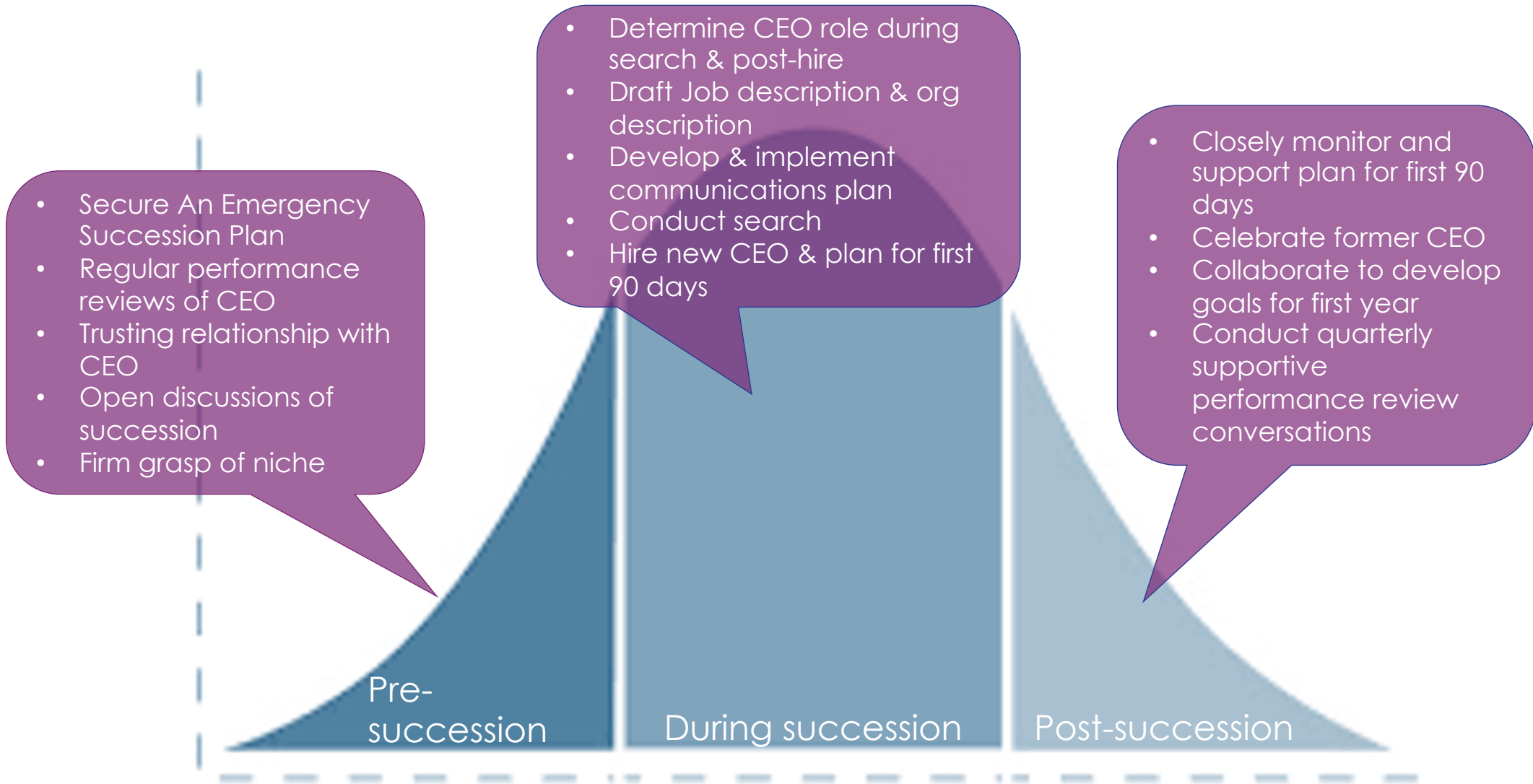
What if we reconceived organizations to foster distribution of power?



Putting It Into Practice



Board's role in leadership succession



Create An Emergency Succession Plan



BEST PRACTICE, BUT VERY
RARE IN THE SECTOR

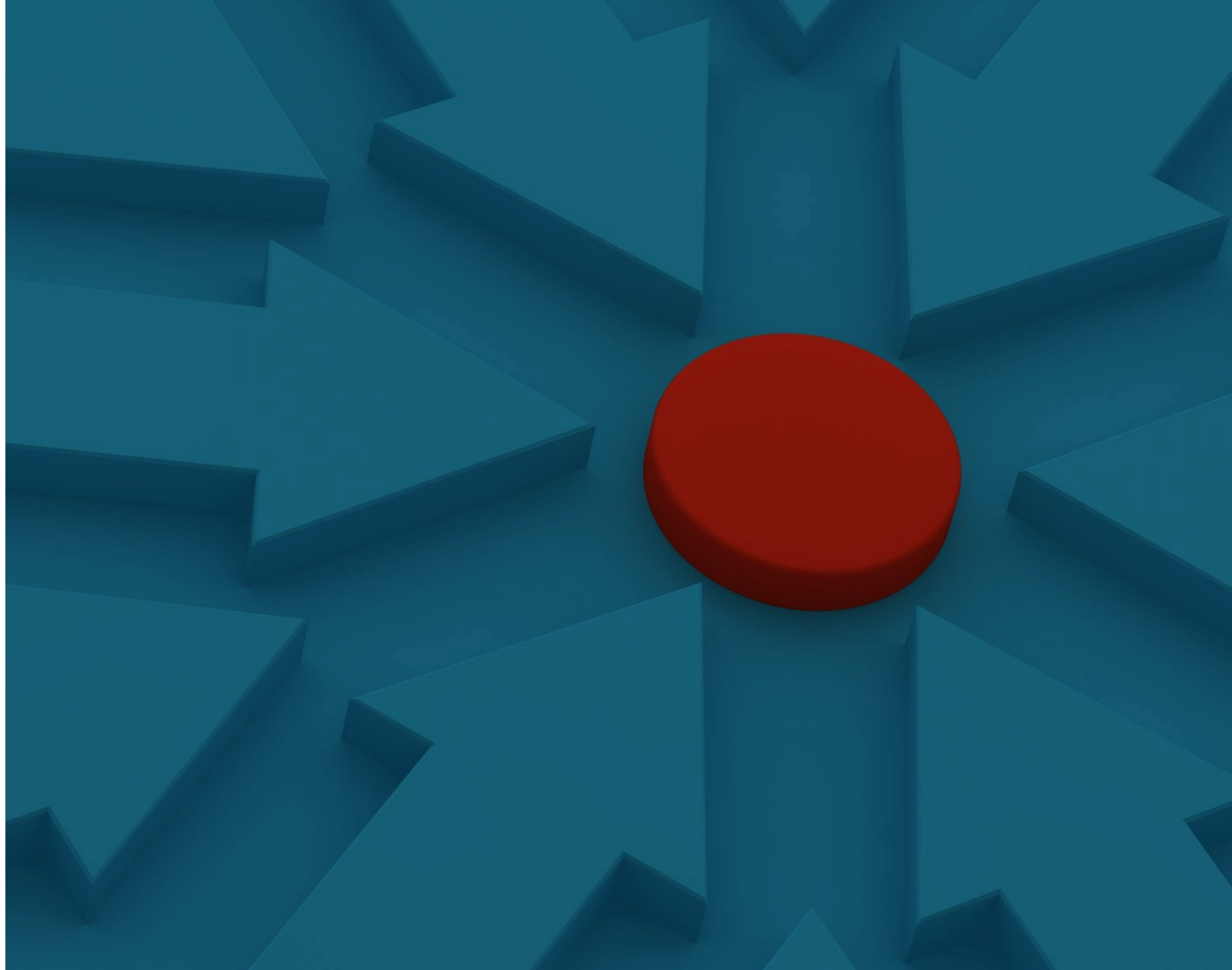


RECORDS CRUCIAL
INFORMATION NEEDED TO
KEEP THE ORGANIZATION
RUNNING



USEFUL EVEN IN THE CASE OF
A PLANNED SUCCESSION

Non- Emergent Succession Planning





SHOULD we consider an interim CEO?

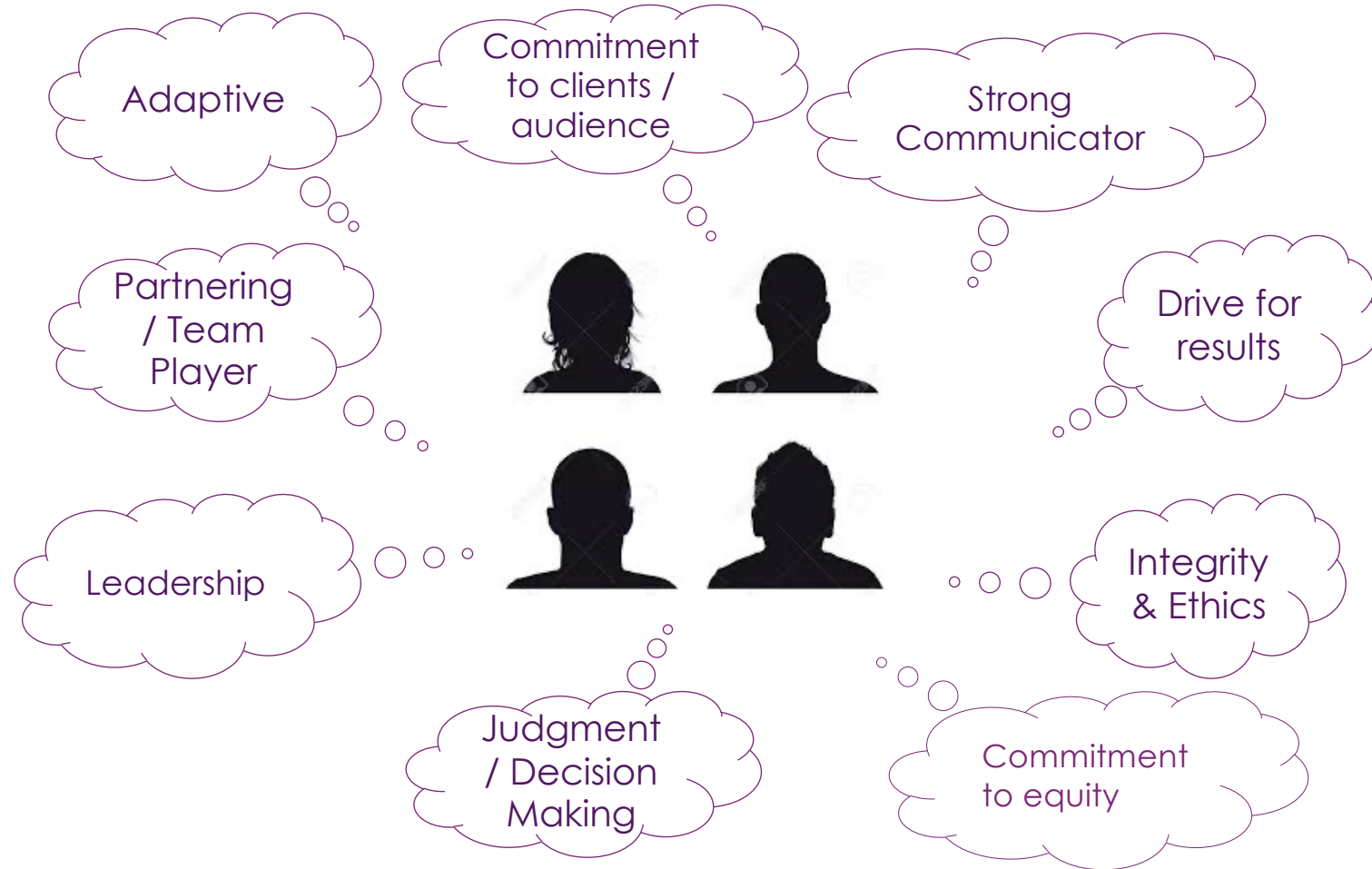
When does it makes sense?

- Long tenured or founder CEO
- When there are financial or organizational issues

What does an interim CEO do?

- Keeps the ship afloat
- Gets the house in order
- Prepares the organization for new leadership

Identify Key Job Competencies





Consider the Communications Plan

- Who will need to hear first? What is the critical path from there?
- What is the messaging? What do you want to emphasize?
- What is the timeline for communications?
- How will you manage ensuring people hear it from you?
- How will you manage staff's anxiety?
- How will you celebrate the departing ED?

Equity in Recruitment and Selection

If you are seeking a person with a marginalized identity, the recruitment process will look different than it has in the past



Examine the job requirements (formal degrees vs. lived experience)



Consider your networks – do they all look like you? Will that yield the right candidates?



If they don't look like you, will they be willing to help get the word out?

What kinds of supports should you put in place to ensure the success of the new ED?

Relationships (funders, elected officials, partners)

Financial management training or support

Risk-management training or support

Managing inherited staff

Support the ED in managing staff departures with remaining staff

Be aware of bias in responding to staff departures or complaints

Remember you hired this person – your role is to be their advocate

Build An Onboarding Plan

Develop a plan for the first 90 days!

Support and monitor the ED during first 90 days



The Rising Tide Program for New Leaders



Onboarding

Getting Your Feet Wet

Tailoring our approach to working together so it best supports your needs in the early phases of your leadership.

Tier 1

Starting Strong & Building Trust

Helps you focus on getting the most out of your first 3 months in the new role:

- Building your 30-60-90 day plans
- Forging a strong partnership with your board chair
- Internal listening session guide
- External conversation guide

Tier 2

Taking the Lead

Coach you through various aspects of building internal and external relationships and using those conversations to articulate your vision for the organization.

- Vision setting coaching and homework
- Making values explicit
- Staff development planning
- Board development planning
- Assessment & capacity building plan
- Understanding the business model & implications for growth

Tier 3

Developing Strategy

Look outside the organization to better understand the context for your work and determine where you want to go in the future.

- Environmental scan
- Mapping community information sources
- Decision-making criteria
- Risk assessment

Tier 4

Future Planning

Revisit the core of the organization's work to refine your model and approach.

- Mission statement review
- Build your theory of change
- Strategic planning
- Ongoing coaching

The under-resourcing of **leadership transitions** is harming nonprofits and leaders of color.

Organizations in transition—especially those led by Black leaders, leaders of color, and other leaders who come from community—are critically underfunded and under-resourced. They often face a trust gap and a “wait and see” approach from funders at the very moment when greater funding for operational growth and capacity building are needed most.

Our vision is grounded both in supporting the immediate and urgent need to support leadership transitions happening now, and in amplifying long-standing/long-term needs named by nonprofits to center and support leaders from community, to reimagine what leadership looks like for social justice nonprofits, to build nonprofit capacity for change, and to create cultures that embody healthy workplaces.



Staff Succession Planning

Evaluate Your Current Staff Using a 9-Box Grid

Higher	<p>Fails to meet most performance expectations</p> <p>Has demonstrated advanced leadership potential, perhaps inconsistently or in a different role</p>	<p>Meets most performance expectations (e.g., strong program leader but lacks supervisory skills)</p> <p>Demonstrates <u>all</u> of the potential criteria required of more advanced leadership positions</p>	<p>Fully meets all performance expectations and potential criteria</p> <p>Capable of moving into a senior leadership position at your organization today and aspires to do so</p>
POTENTIAL	<p>Fails to meet most performance expectations</p> <p>Some potential to move into a senior leadership position, but needs to demonstrate additional aspects</p>	<p>Meets most performance expectations (e.g., strong program leader but lacks supervisory skills)</p> <p>Some potential to move into a senior leadership position, but needs to work on some development areas</p>	<p>Fully meets all performance expectations, including both programmatic and supervisory skills</p> <p>Some potential to move into a senior leadership position but needs to work on some development areas</p>
Lower	<p>Insufficient information to assess this person and/or new in the role</p> <p>Fails to meet Most performance Expectations and Shows low potential</p>	<p>Meets most performance expectations of (e.g., strong program leader but lacks supervisory skills)</p> <p>Low potential to move into a senior leadership position (i.e., lack of aspiration, ability, and/or engagement)</p>	<p>Fully meets all performance expectations, including both programmatic and supervisory skills</p> <p>Low potential to move into a senior leadership position, (i.e., lack of aspiration, ability, and/or engagement)</p>
	Lower	PERFORMANCE	Higher

Implications for Action ...

POTENTIAL	Higher	<p>May be new to role; ensure support is available</p> <p>May be in wrong role; consider reassignment</p>	<p>Continue to develop in current role; consider providing test assignment in more senior role</p>	<p>Consider providing significant new assignments or reassign to a more senior role</p>
		<p>May be in the wrong role or at the wrong level; consider providing test assignment in different role</p>	<p>Continue to develop in current role</p>	<p>Gradually expand current role</p>
	Lower	<p>Consider replacing if support has not improved performance</p>	<p>Continue to develop in current role; periodically reassess potential for growth</p>	<p>Retain in current role; periodically reassess potential for growth</p>
		Lower	PERFORMANCE	Higher

Create 70/20/10 Development Plans for key roles

70% on the job experience (stretch assignments)



20% peer coaching or mentoring



10% classroom learning

Support New Hires

Create 30-60-90-day goals to clarify and provide structure to the early days:



SAMPLE: Onboarding game plan

Before official start pre-reading and pre-work

2012 Budget, 2013 Budget, decks from our last strategic planning retreat, research on all of the school districts we operate in, informal lunches with individual team members

What will success look like in this role:

After 30 days

Excellent working knowledge of all districts we work with and projected numbers of how many school partners in each district we will add this year

After 60 days

Manage associate to revamp school outreach process and materials

After 90 days

X+ new school partners
A draft 3-year growth plan with cost estimates

Relationship building

Top 3 internal relationships to build:

Executive Director
Strategy Associate (direct report)
Development Senior Director

Top 3 external relationships to build:

Superintendent of X school district
Superintendent of Y school district
Executive Director of Z
Charter Network

Culture

The 2 biggest potential cultural differences:

We have a data-driven, results-oriented, no excuses culture that can be hard for folks to get used to.

We give a lot of feedback—positive and constructive.

Mentors – you need 2

Caring confidante:

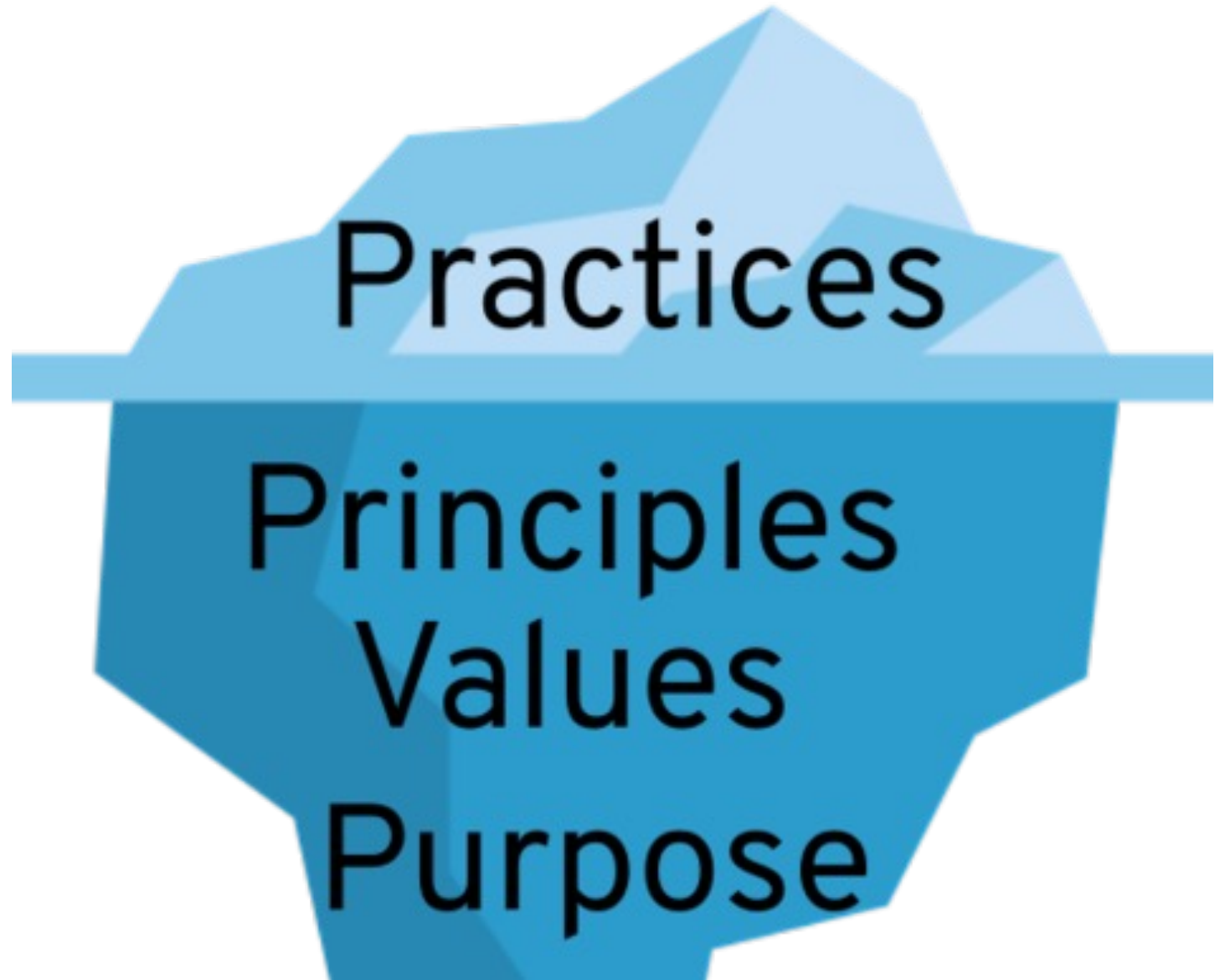
Development Senior Director

Professional advisor:

Strategy Director at neighboring region

Building a culture of succession

- There needs to be a strong organizational culture
- Supported by clear shared values that reinforce that culture



Your Presenting Team



Molly Penn

As a consultant to mission-based organizations for nearly two decades, **Molly Penn** has deep experience working across many aspects of the nonprofit sector - including the arts, community development, education, human service, social justice - to help organizations become stronger and have a greater impact. She is particularly interested in how effective strategy can help organizations disrupt and rebalance systems of power, privilege and access - whether through cultural reflection, direct service, philanthropy or advocacy. She began her professional life on staff at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Inc. as well as held senior staff positions at various smaller arts organizations. She has an MBA in Management from Fordham University, a Masters from Columbia University and a BA from Bard College. She is certified in Appreciative Inquiry change management, Lean process analysis, Hogan personality inventory, and trained as a professional coach. Molly serves on the board of the Alliance for Nonprofit Management and on the selection committee for Nonprofit New York's Nonprofit Excellence Awards. Molly@penncreativestrategy.com.



Marissa Lewis

A native of the Bronx, **Marissa Lewis** is experienced in non-profit management as both grantmaker and grantseeker, including fundraising, strategy, grant/grantee management, and board development in staff, consultant, and volunteer/Board capacities. She has worked extensively with arts and cultural organizations in a variety of roles on staff. She is a strong consultant known for her empathy, keen sense of culture, and for building and strengthening organizations with the necessary systems and frameworks. Her 20-year career has been anchored in ensuring individuals, communities, and organizations have access to all the tools they need to succeed. Marissa is a graduate of Binghamton University in New York and did graduate work at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. She has been a consultant with PENN Creative Strategy for three years. Marissa@penncreativestrategy.com

**Questions &
Comments?**

