

Daring to Lead 2011

A National Study of
Executive Director
Leadership

Survey Instrument

Instructions for taking the survey: For each question, choose the answer(s) that comes closest to being true for you. In some cases, the question instructs you to select a certain number of responses from a list; please choose the number of responses requested. The best way to take the survey is all at once; it takes approximately 20 to 25 minutes to complete.

*** Note on terminology: The titles Executive Director and CEO are both used throughout the nonprofit sector. For the purposes of this survey, we use the abbreviation ED to mean both.*

1. Are you currently an Executive Director or CEO of a nonprofit organization?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Please tell us about your career path.

2. Throughout your entire career and including your current positions, how many total years have you:

- Worked as paid staff within the nonprofit sector?
- Served on a nonprofit board of directors?
- Served as a nonprofit ED (including your current position)?

- a) Less than 1 Year
- b) 1 Year - 2 Years, 11 Months
- c) 3 Years - 5 Years, 11 Months
- d) 6 Years - 9 Years, 11 Months
- e) 10 Years - 19 Years, 11 Months
- f) 20 Years +

3. Are you currently serving on a nonprofit board of directors (for an organization other than your own)?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Please tell us about your current job experience.

4. Which of the following describes how your predecessor left her/his ED position?

- a) Voluntarily
- b) Forced resignation/fired
- c) Don't know
- d) N/A = I have no predecessor

5. How many years have you been in your current ED position?

- a) Less than 1 Year
- b) 1 Year - 2 Years, 11 Months
- c) 3 Years - 5 Years, 11 Months
- d) 6 Years - 9 Years, 11 Months
- e) 10 Years - 19 Years, 11 Months
- f) 20 Years +

6. Are you a founder or co-founder of your current organization?

- a) Yes
- b) No

7. At your current organization prior to becoming the ED were you at any point:

- A member of the board of directors?
- A paid staff member?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Please tell us about your leadership.

8. How effective do you feel in each of these leadership areas?

- Leading self – Have a sense of personal purpose, self-awareness and understanding of personal leadership style, strengths, and abilities.
- Leading others inside my organization – Can relate to and understand others, develop them, coordinate their efforts and build commitments.
- Leading my organization – Can develop, communicate and manage organizational vision, strategy and priorities. Can problem-solve, make decisions, and manage and communicate change.
- External leadership – Can connect to and work with others outside of the organization in order to advance the organization's mission. Includes leading in collaborations, coalitions, partnerships, and other external community relationships.

- a) Very ineffective
- b) Somewhat ineffective
- c) Effective
- d) Very effective

9. Please choose the statement that most closely describes your confidence in your financial analysis skills?

- a) I have difficulty understanding our financial statements.
- b) I have a basic understanding of our financial statements, but sometimes get confused in a few areas.
- c) I have a strong understanding of our financial statements.

Please tell us your feelings about being an ED.

10. Please choose the statement that most closely describes how you feel about the amount of time you currently spend in each of these areas:

- Financial analysis and planning
- Fundraising
- Working with the board of directors
- Public policy/advocacy
- Organizational strategy/vision
- Managing and developing staff
- Program management
- Marketing/communications/public relations
- Networking/external relationships and partnerships

- a) I spend the right amount of time in this area
- b) I do not spend enough time in this area
- c) I spend more time than is ideal in this area
- d) I do not spend any time on this, nor do I need to

11. To what degree do the following aspects of the ED position energize (e.g. satisfy, rejuvenate) or deplete (e.g. frustrate, burnout) you?

- Program management
- Human resources
- Technology
- Financial management
- Operations/administration
- Marketing/communications
- Public policy/advocacy
- Managing direct reports (supervision)
- Working with individual donors
- Working with grantmaking foundations
- Working with government funders/contracting
- Working with external partners
- Working with the board of directors
- Working with partners or collaborators

- a) Energizing
- b) Somewhat Energizing
- c) Somewhat Depleting
- d) Depleting
- e) N/A = I don't do this in my role as ED

12. Do you have the work-life balance that is right for you?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I am not sure

13. How burned out do you feel in your current position as ED?

- 1 = Not at all burned out
- 2 = A little burned out
- 3 = Somewhat burned out
- 4 = Very burned out

14. To what extent has the recession caused you anxiety in your role as an ED?

- 1 =Has not caused anxiety
- 2 = Caused low anxiety
- 3 =Caused medium anxiety
- 4 =Caused high anxiety

15. To what extent do you feel isolated (e.g. no internal or external networks you can turn to for advice and support) in your ED role?

- 1 = Not at all isolated
- 2 = A little isolated
- 3 = Somewhat isolated
- 4 = Very isolated

16. Which of the following professional development sources/activities have you utilized within the last year and how effective were they?

- Executive coaching
- Professional associations
- Nonprofit Management Certificate/Degree programs
- Topical workshops and conferences
- Leadership development programs
- Peer networks or peer groups

- 1 =Very ineffective
- 2 = Somewhat ineffective

- 3 = Effective
- 4 = Very effective
- N/A = Did not utilize

17. If you are currently using a paid executive coach, to what degree do you feel it contributes to your success as an ED?

- No, I am not currently using a paid executive coach
- Yes, I am using a paid executive coach but it does not contribute to my success
- Yes, I am using a paid executive coach and it contributes a little to my success
- Yes, I am using a paid executive coach and it greatly contributes to my success

18. In the last three years, have you received a grant or other assistance from one or more funders specifically for the purposes of developing/supporting you as a leader in your role as ED?

- a) Yes
- b) No

19. If you had an annual performance evaluation within the past year conducted by your board of directors, to what extent is it useful to you in your job?

- a) I have not had an annual performance evaluation within the past year
- b) Not at all useful
- c) A little useful
- d) Very useful

20. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about your job as ED?

- a) I am very happy in my job
- b) I have more good days than bad days
- c) I have more bad days than good days
- d) I am very unhappy in my job

Please tell us about your staff.

21. Do you have a senior manager (other than you) who is primarily responsible for these functions?

- Program
- Human resources
- Fundraising
- Technology
- Finance
- Operations/administration
- Marketing/communications
- Public policy/advocacy

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A, we don't have this function

22. If you left your position today, would anyone inside the organization be a credible candidate for your position?

- Yes – there is at least one credible person on staff
- Yes – there is at least one credible person on the board
- Yes – there are credible people on both staff and board
- No – no one on staff or board is a credible candidate

23. Do you have one or more people on your staff that you would trust to make important organizational decisions without any consultation from you?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A, I do not have staff

24. To what extent does the term “shared leadership” (a leadership approach that is inclusive, collaborative, and shares leadership responsibilities with others throughout the organization) characterize how you view your own leadership style?

- 1= Not at all
- 2 = A little bit
- 3 = Somewhat
- 4 = Very much

25. Do you think the majority of your staff would describe you as practicing shared leadership (a leadership approach that is inclusive, collaborative, and shares leadership responsibilities with others throughout the organization)?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A, I do not have staff

Please tell us about your board of directors.

26. Is there anyone on your current board of directors that would be the ideal next board chair, when your current chair steps down?

- a) Yes
- b) No

27. Does anyone on your current board of directors provide a significant amount of effort to support the organization in any of the following areas?

- Public policy/advocacy on behalf of your organization
- Community ambassadorship
- Fund development
- Financial oversight
- Supervision and guidance to you in your ED position
- Strategic decision making and planning
- Other technical management expertise (e.g. technology, human resources, marketing, law, etc.)

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) N/A, We do not request support from the board in this area

28. Does anyone on your current board of directors participate in any of the following fund development activities? (check all that apply)

- Donor identification/prospecting
- Donor cultivation
- Asking for gifts
- Grantwriting
- Making a personal financial contribution

29. Does 100% of your current board of directors make an annual (every 12 months) financial contribution to your organization?

- a) Yes
- b) No

30. When the time comes for you to move on, how confident are you that your board of directors will hire the right person to be the next ED?

- 1= Not confident
- 2 = A little confident
- 3 = Somewhat confident
- 4 = Very confident

31. How do you think your board of directors would rate your current job performance?
- Below expectations
 - Meets expectations
 - Exceeds expectations
 - I don't know
32. Approximately how many hours do you spend per month on all board related activities? (e.g. meetings, recruitment, orientation, committees)?
- Less than 5
 - 5-10 hours
 - 11-19 hours
 - 20-29 hours
 - 30 or more hours
33. How would you assess the amount of time you spend on board activities relative to what you think is needed to meet the organization's goals?
- I spend too much time on the board
 - I spend just the right amount of time on the board
 - I spend too little time on the board
34. How satisfied are you with your board of directors' performance overall?
- 1 = Not at all satisfied
 - 2 = A little satisfied
 - 3 = Somewhat satisfied
 - 4 = Very satisfied
35. How confident are you in your ability to influence or impact your board's performance?
- 1 = Not confident
 - 2 = A little confident
 - 3 = Somewhat confident
 - 4 = Very confident
 - 5 = Not sure
36. Please choose the statement that most closely describes how you feel about your relationship with your current board chair/president:
- Dysfunctional (may include: low trust, inauthentic communication, not working collaboratively)
 - Functional (may include: adequate trust, effective communication, working well together)
 - Exceptional (may include: deep trust, authentic communication, shared leadership)
37. Please choose the statement that most closely describes how you feel about your level of transparency with your current board.
- I can share and discuss my mistakes with the board of directors without fear they will hold them against me.
 - I cannot share and discuss my mistakes with the board of directors without fear they will hold them against me.
38. Are you a member of your organization's board?
- Yes, I was voted on to the board like any other member
 - Yes, but not a voting member
 - Yes, ex officio (by virtue of being the ED)
 - No

Please tell us about your organizational resources.

39. What is the annual operating budget of your organization?
- 0 - 25,000
 - 25,001 - 100,000
 - 100,001 - 500,000

- d) 500,001 - 1 Million
- e) 1.1 Million – 3 Million
- f) 3.1 Million - 5 Million
- g) 5.1 Million - 10 Million
- h) 10.1 Million - 20 Million
- i) 21 Million +

40. Compared to last year, is your current operating budget:

- a) Approximately the same as last year?
- b) Smaller than last year?
- c) Larger than last year?

41. Approximately how many months is your organization's operating reserve (unrestricted cash on hand in excess of operating needs)?

- a) I don't know
- b) 0 - 1 Month
- c) 1 Month 1 Week - 2 Months
- d) 2 Months 1 Week - 3 Months
- e) 3 Months 1 Week - 4 Months
- f) 4 Months 1 Week - 5 Months
- g) 5 Months 1 Week - 6 Months
- h) 6 Months 1 Week or greater

42. Do government contracts make up more than 50% of your annual budget?

- a) Yes
- b) No

43. Do foundation grants make up more than 50% of your annual budget?

- a) Yes
- b) No

44. Do donations from individuals make up more than 50% of your annual budget?

- a) Yes
- b) No

45. How do you think the recession has impacted your organization's financial health and stability?

- a) Has NOT had an impact
- b) Has had a MINOR positive impact
- c) Has had a MODERATELY positive impact
- d) Has had a SIGNIFICANT positive impact
- e) Has had a MINOR negative impact
- f) Has had a MODERATELY negative impact
- g) Has had a SIGNIFICANT negative impact

Please tell us about your future career plans.

46. Knowing that the future may be impossible to predict, how much longer do you imagine that you'll stay in your current position as ED?

- a) Less than 1 year
- b) 1 - 2 years
- c) 3 - 4 years
- d) 5 or more years

47. Have you delayed leaving your current ED position for any of the following reasons? (check all that apply)

- Loss in personal retirement savings/investments
- Loss in agency funding/sustainability
- Shrinking job market

- Appropriate replacement not available
 - Have not delayed leaving
48. Have you given notice to your board of directors that you are leaving your current position as ED?
- a) Yes, I have given notice
 - b) No, I have not
 - c) No, but I am actively considering leaving
49. Does your agency currently have a documented succession plan for the ED position?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
50. Has a successor been explicitly identified to be the next ED when you leave?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
51. Are you in an explicit mentoring relationship (where you are the mentor) with:
- Anyone on your staff?
 - An ED of another organization?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
52. Do you work full-time (40 or more hours a week)?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
53. What is your current annual salary (excluding benefits and other non-monetary compensation)?
- a) 0 - 30,000
 - b) 30,001 - 50,000
 - c) 50,001 - 75,000
 - d) 75,001 - 100,000
 - e) 100,001 – 150,000
 - f) 150,001 – 200,000
 - g) 200,001+
54. How satisfied are you with your total compensation package (including benefits)?
- 1 = Not at all satisfied
 - 2 = A little satisfied
 - 3 = Somewhat satisfied
 - 4 = Very satisfied
- N/A = I do not receive financial compensation.
55. If you left today, do you think your organization would have to pay more than you are making to attract a qualified successor?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Other (Specify)

Please tell us about you.

56. What is your age? (enter whole number)
57. What is your gender?
- a) Male
 - b) Female
 - c) Transgender

- d) Inter-sex
- e) Decline to State

58. What is your race/ethnicity?

- a) African American
- b) Asian/Pacific Islander
- c) Latino/a
- d) Middle Eastern
- e) Native American
- f) White/Anglo
- g) Multi-Racial
- h) Other (Specify)

59. Were you born in the United States?

- a) Yes
- b) No

60. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

- a) High School
- b) Bachelor's
- c) Master's
- d) PhD, JD or Other Advanced Degree
- e) None of the above

61. Which best describes your household's socio-economic status when you were growing up?

- a) Poor
- b) Working class
- c) Middle class
- d) Upper middle class
- e) Upper class

62. Which best describes your current socio-economic status?

- a) Poor
- b) Working class
- c) Middle class
- d) Upper middle class
- e) Upper class

63. Please estimate your total gross annual household income?

- a) 0 - 30,000
- b) 31,000 - 50,000
- c) 51,000 - 75,000
- d) 76,000 - 100,000
- e) 101,000 - 150,000
- f) 150,000 - 200,000
- g) 200,000 +

Please tell us about your nonprofit organization.

64. What is the primary activity of the nonprofit organization of which you are the ED? (check the one that comes closest)

- a) Human Services (non-healthcare)
- b) Health/Mental Health
- c) Arts/Culture
- d) Environment
- e) Public Benefit/Advocacy
- f) Education

- g) International/Foreign Affairs
- h) Religious/Spiritual
- i) Animal Welfare
- j) Community/Economic Development
- k) Foundation
- l) Intermediary
- m) Other (Specify)

65. In what year was your organization founded?

66. Which of the following organizational life-cycle stages most closely describes your current organization at this time?

- a) Start-Up/New - Simple programs are initiated or a mix of diverse and non-integrated activities.
- b) Adolescent- Programs begin to establish themselves in the market. Often demand is greater than capacity.
- c) Growing Mature/Sustainable - Core programs are established and recognized in the community. Programs functioning well.
- d) Stagnation/Burn out - No longer meeting market needs. Decline in product quality.
- e) Renewal - Long range program planning. New programs are added & deleted as market dictates.
- f) Decline/Shut-Down - Loss of credibility with funders and clients. Major reduction in referrals.

67. How many paid staff and volunteers does your organization utilize?

- Paid Staff FTE (Full Time Equivalent)
- Volunteers

- a) 0
- b) 1-5
- c) 6-15
- d) 16-25
- e) 26-50
- f) 51-100
- g) 100+

68. In what zip code is your headquarters office located?

69. To your recollection, have you answered this national ED survey in the past, from either the 2006 or 2001 published *Daring to Lead* research reports?

- 2006
- 2001

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Maybe