

# Succession Planning

The **#1** universal risk concern among nonprofit board members is the lack of a CEO succession plan.

Source: Risk Assessment led by the Nonprofit Risk Management Center

## Did you know?

That, on average, boards only spend 2 hours per year on succession planning?

Source: 2010 Survey on CEO Succession Planning, Stanford University

## Tips and Advice for Succession Planning

### STEP 1: Start talking about succession planning

The sooner the board starts talking about the risk of planned or unplanned departures, the sooner a plan can be created and worry abated.

### STEP 2: Identify a small team and establish a project timeline

Create a committee or tag an existing committee. Ask the team to spend two or three months (tops) considering the issues and drafting a clear plan for the board's consideration.

## MYTHS about Succession Planning

### You need a "successor" to have a succession plan

Not true. Although very large nonprofits may be able to afford a #2 executive, most cannot. Your succession plan should be a road map explaining what the board will do if your CEO departs—for any reason.

### CEO succession planning is the CEO's responsibility

Absolutely not. The board, not the CEO, is responsible for ensuring a smooth transition from one CEO to the next.

### Talking about succession planning will lead to our CEO's Departure

Hardly. Succession plans inspire confidence! And unless your CEO has discovered a serum to combat human mortality, s/he will be leaving some day!

### Since there are many reasons for exiting a CEO role, there need to be multiple plans

Not quite. Don't over-complicate the process! Create a simple plan for your organization.

## Get help from the Nonprofit Risk Management Center

**READ:** [Avoid Transition Trauma with a Succession Plan.](#)

**CALL** the Center at 703.777.3504 to learn more about our consulting offerings.

**ENROLL** as an [Affiliate Member](#) to enjoy year-round access to pro bono Risk Help. We can answer you succession planning questions to relieve your worries.

Created by:

