
PINNACLE ADVANTAGE

A PUBLICATION OF LEADERSHIP RECRUITERS: MATCHING TALENT TO OPPORTUNITY

The Pinnacle Message

This has been a major time of change in our nation, in our economy, and for me personally. Change is about reflection, loss, and the creation of a new normal. Optimists believe a bad situation presents a challenge and an opportunity. As an optimist, I am hopeful that with the experience of fear and loss come opportunities to leave the safety of the familiar and enter the whirlwind of change. Once we accept and re-frame change, we can come out the other side, embracing a new way of leading and making an impact in our world.

Regards,

Priscilla

The Dream Board Chair

by Priscilla Rosenwald

Every nonprofit organization (as well as public agency) is looking for the perfect board chairperson who can excel at every aspect of leading the organization to the next level. It's true that the board chair is a critical element to a successful organization. Selecting a board chair must be a careful and strategically well-planned process. You don't select a board chair based on who raises their hand first and cries "pick me."

Serving as the chair of a board is not a role for the undecided or inexperienced. To do the job right demands at times exceptional and supernatural qualities, endless energy, and undivided attention and commitment. Accepting the responsibility of leading a nonprofit board, not just serving as a figurehead, assumes that the chair possesses the leadership competencies through demonstrated (professional or volunteer) experience to do an effective job and produce results, namely leading a team, running a business, or handling the allocation of resources.

It has been our finding that the focus of nonprofit and business leaders, in their board roles, is frequently on keeping administrative costs and enterprising risks low, without consideration of what it takes to ensure program quality and impact. They often do not understand how the mission is realized or how its impact is assessed. They would never consider running their own businesses without the necessary resources or talent just to keep overhead low.

Imagine if these leaders used their board roles to promote a greater investment in capacity building, succession planning, and performance measurements, rather than minimizing risk and administrative

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The Dream Board Chair (Continued)

costs. Without adequate training on their role as a nonprofit board leader, they miss creating the alignment of the mission with an understanding of the talent and resources needed for success and sustainability. We propose that the stewards of mission-driven organizations should be adequately trained in the implications of their governance roles, before assuming the mantle of board chair.

Recent Articles from the Guidance for Good Blog

Can You Do More With Less? Yes!

Nonprofits and Talent Management in Tough Economic Times

Before we talk about why nonprofits should continue hiring during a recession, I want to paint a picture of you in the near future.

It's spring, 2011. You're standing in front of your board, every one of them eager to know the state of your nonprofit. Here's what you get to say:

"The last three years weren't easy for us. Donations were down and we had to make hard decisions about how we funded our programs. But I'm here today to tell you we are emerging smarter and stronger than ever and, with some strategic hires, we are poised to exceed our program goals and the realization of our vision."

Want to give that speech in 18 months? Now is the time to start thinking about it by strategically attracting and retaining the best talent.

Why focus on talent now? Because successful talent management delivers the twin benefits of lowered costs and increased productivity, which are especially welcome in a constrained business climate. Regardless of market conditions, organizations need to hire and manage their talent

For-Profit Execs: Are You Ready for the Big Crossover?

After years of straddling the line between nonprofits and for-profits (many nonprofits recruit board members from the corporate sector), there's one conversation I have with the for-profit executives pretty frequently.

It always starts like this: "I've worked at OmniCorp for 20 years. I'm thinking about moving to a nonprofit ..."

The nonprofit world is alluring to for-profit executives, and their motivation is almost always pure and altruistic. They see the move as one where they can loosen their tie — or cut it off altogether — take a pay cut and change the world.

And while that may be true, the transition is often more challenging than some executives expect.

Here are some other questions to consider:

- Are you ready for fuzzier math? While the business sector's primary goal is to make a profit for shareholders through the sale of goods and services, nonprofits strive to be agents of change, which is usually tougher to measure.
- Are you ready for a whole new kind of marketplace? In the business sector,

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Can You Do More with Less? Yes! (Continued)

to fill positions and manage performance.

Recruiting now is also a good long-term competitive strategy. It's useful to actively recruit people who have been laid off by your competitors and score some talent that will make your organization shine well after the economic storms have passed.

The best talent management guides hiring and performance processes. Done correctly – especially in a down market – it can be the best use of a nonprofit leader's time.

And, it might just get you a standing ovation.

Transition, Synergy, and Change

This fall, Leadership Recruiters will move into the office of eXude Benefits Group. The collaboration will provide for creative approaches to talent management and wonderful space for CEO, COO, and board leadership roundtables.

Our new address is:

2218 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103

Are You Ready for the Big Crossover? (Continued)

outcome measurements are driven by shareholders; in the nonprofit sector, funders drive outcome measurements.

- Are you ready for less support? Nonprofits tend to be high on commitment to mission but low on investing resources in staff, such as improving compensation, on-going education, cross-functional training, and retirement planning.
- Are you ready to get involved in multiple disciplines? At many nonprofits, there is an understanding that "we're all in this together." In addition to their original job description, many executives end up becoming de facto CIOs, CFOs, or CMOs.
- Are you ready to work hard? I mean, really hard? Almost all executive jobs are tough, but many executives who move to a nonprofit indicate that they are working harder than they expected, since existing management talent is overextended.
- If that doesn't scare off my executives considering a crossover, we then start talking about how to make the crossover happen, which we'll save for a separate post.

If you have answered "yes" so far, the next steps involve creating a resume and biographical sketch outlining the transferable competencies that would add value to a nonprofit. If you have never served on a nonprofit board, now is the time to explore missions that you want to pursue and offer to join a board committee. All nonprofits welcome expertise on their committees, and this is the spring-board to a governance role. With this in hand, you are ready to take your leap.

Recent Recruitment Projects

- Chief Executive Officer – **AchieveAbility**, Philadelphia
- Director of Development – **Children’s Literacy Initiative**, Philadelphia
- Senior Program Officer – **International Women’s Health Coalition**, New York
- Performance Management Systems – **NoVo Foundation**, New York
- Executive Vice President, Development – **Opportunity Finance Network**, Philadelphia
- Director of Foundation Relations – **Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts**, Philadelphia
- Executive Director – **Philadelphia Film Festival**, Philadelphia
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- Executive Director – **Women Against Abuse**, Philadelphia
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