



M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust Questions on Organizational Leadership

Organizational Leadership: Board

- Do the board members have a clear sense of the organization’s mission and what it means to “steward the mission”?
 - Can they articulate how the mission is expressed in primary ways → in the program and services of the organization?

- Do the board members have a sense of responsibility of stewarding the CEO and leadership of the organization and put in place “practices” that demonstrate care, such as:
 - Regular feedback and goal setting
 - Time away for continuing education, rest and vacation, professional development
 - Good communication practices

- Do the board members have a demonstrated investment in the life of the organization?
 - Attendance at events/activities?
 - Giving (sponsorships) as appropriate to the sector in which they work?
 - Introducing or representing the organization to others, “connecting”?

- Does the board have practices in place to improve their work as a board? (e.g.: self-evaluation, board attendance, focused agenda, strategic thinking/priorities)
 - Do the staff get “mixed signals” from individual board members in regard to their work or priorities?

- Does the board think about the future?
 - Changing context in which the organization will work?
 - Changing constituencies they are called to serve?
 - Changing funding streams or business model?

- Does the board encourage members to bring “expertise” / “experience” to the work on the board?
 - Do any board members “dominate” the focus or priorities?
 - Is the board able to synthesize and prioritize their thinking?

- Does the Executive/CEO/Leadership team –
 - Honor and value the board and its role?
 - Have systems in place to communicate with board members and involve the board in “appropriate ways” healthy communication?
 - Is executive team “all in” on the mission or simply filling a role? Are they seeking to do their own thing or protect their turf?

Organizational Leadership: Executive

Does the executive (CEO, President) –

- Work with board and organization leadership in establishing priorities in the organization and share/working on those with leadership of the organization?
- Aware of good opportunities **BUT** able to say “no” and focus on better/best opportunities? Stretch the organization, but not overwhelm?
- Exhibit a commitment to involving an executive team in both management and representing the organization?
- Does the leadership exhibit an awareness and value the importance of best practices in “sector” in which they work? Are they aware, open to seeing blind spots?
- Exhibits an awareness of threats and challenges for sector in which organization finds itself?
- (CEO) Demonstrates a commitment to growth personally, and model balance. Does he/she encourage leadership the same way within the organization?
 - Professional development
 - Outside involvement
 - Back-up/team
 - Honoring contributions of others
- Has systems in place for feedback, growth of leadership/members of organization
 - Able to receive “informal” feedback and input
 - Make hard decisions when necessary
 - Demonstrate openness at discussing thinking, decisions, and challenges?

