

EXECUTIVE TRANSITIONS

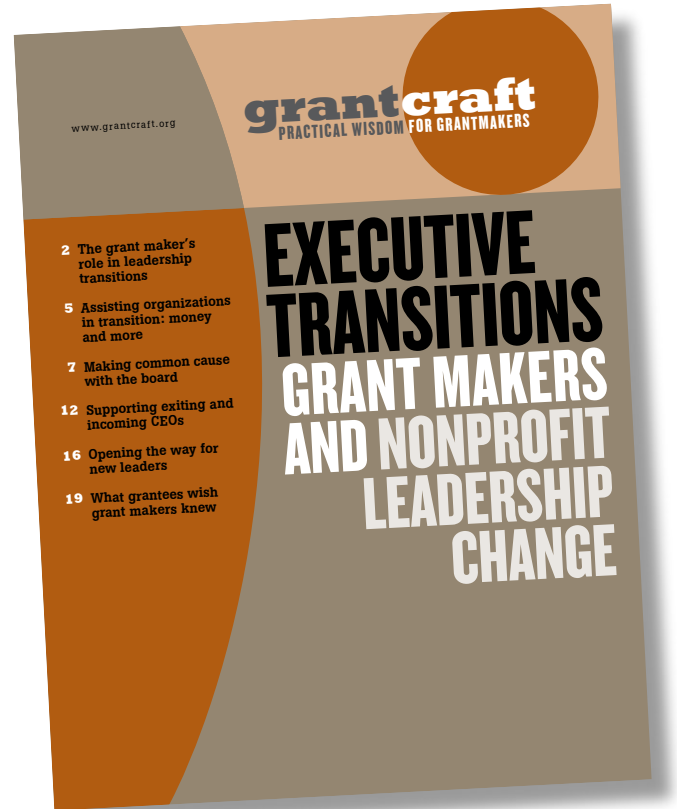
How can a grant maker help a nonprofit survive and even thrive when its leader departs?

IN THIS GUIDE

Even for seasoned funders, leadership transition can be a tricky business — raising questions about the grant maker’s role, maintaining grant support, and the fine line between helping and intruding. Contributors offer practical advice on making common cause with the organization’s board, working constructively with exiting and incoming CEOs, collaborating with other funders, and more.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **When a board member calls**
- **“Prepare, pivot, thrive” — steps in executive transition management**
- **Finding and supporting tomorrow’s leaders**



“If somebody is in a position for 20 years, it’s important to just bring the topic up, to normalize asking about it.”
– Grant maker on raising the succession question

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A sample from the guide:

Leadership Succession Strategies at a Glance

GRANT MAKING

- Keep offering your usual support; don't adopt a wait-and-see attitude.
- Award transition grants, which can be used for a broad range of activities, from hiring consultants to coaching, strategic planning, cross-training, and retreats.
- Encourage and support consultancy services that help nonprofit organizations with transitions.
- Be the first foundation to say "yes" to a new leader with a grant.
- Commission research about current and upcoming leadership transitions in your community or field.

OTHER THAN GRANT MAKING

- Provide grantees with sample materials and other information about emergency or ongoing succession plans.
- Encourage the idea that a transition is an opportunity to increase diversity.
- Link outgoing CEOs with CEOs who have successfully left nonprofit positions.
- Assemble and distribute materials about transitions, tailored to the needs of CEOs and boards.
- Use the foundation's publications to highlight the topic of leadership succession.
- Help new leaders make connections in the community, including the funding community.
- Raise awareness of leadership succession in your ongoing routines and grant making practice.

WITH OTHER FUNDERS

- Convene a funders' forum on executive transitions and succession planning.
- Form a local or regional funders' collaborative to support leadership transitions.
- Work with the collaborative to develop an executive transition or leadership succession nonprofit consulting service in your community.
- Pool funds with other foundations to pay for transition services.