

Executive Director Recruiting Plan

Finding the right leader to guide your organization is one of the most important things you will do. Having a clear and comprehensive roadmap for hiring your Executive Director (ED), will help you attract and select top-tier candidates who share the passion for your nonprofit's mission and vision. This resource provides information that will help you develop a recruiting plan to guide your organization in attracting and selecting the best person for the role.

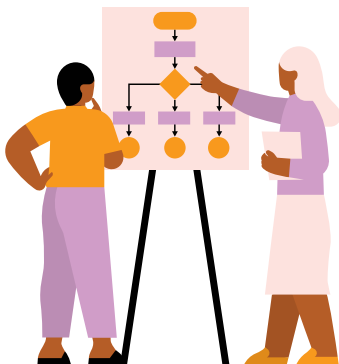
Create a Board Committee

When preparing to hire an Executive Director (ED), the first step is to form a Board Committee to lead the process. While the ED will ultimately be directly managed by the Board Chair, the Committee will be actively involved in the recruiting process and the decision of who to hire. It may be helpful for this Committee to include an individual who has knowledge of or experience in compliant hiring practices.



If your organization has other staff members, it may be helpful to consider what role you want them to play in the interviewing and selection process. Your team members will give you valuable insights of what is needed to succeed in the role.

Define the Role: Develop the Job Description



- Finalize the job description. Ensure the job description is comprehensive, outlining key responsibilities, qualifications, and expectations.
- Determine the salary range and benefits package. Research industry standards and consider the organization's budget to attract top talent.

Develop a Job Application

- Make the hiring committee's task easier (and more compliant) by creating a standard employment application. This is intended to provide your company with an opportunity to make specific inquiries into an applicant's work and educational background in a standardized way. This can make it easier to identify which candidates meet the minimum qualifications for the job and to compare candidates to one another.
- Even if a candidate has provided a resume, he or she should also be required to submit an employment application, since the application form generally elicits information applicants tend to exclude from their resumes (e.g., reasons for leaving previous job and salary history). However, employment applications must be carefully crafted and should take into consideration federal, state, and local laws.
- Protect your nonprofit! Employers must avoid certain questions, particularly those that may reveal whether an applicant is a member of a protected class under equal employment opportunity laws.



Identify Recruitment Channels



- In addition to the standard online job boards, such as Indeed and LinkedIn, consider utilizing online job boards specific to nonprofit and leadership roles. Websites like Idealist and NonprofitJobs can be effective.
- Network with nonprofit professionals and organizations. Attend industry events, conferences, and networking mixers to connect with potential candidates.
- Partner with universities and nonprofit management programs. Collaborate with career services offices and alumni networks to reach recent graduates and experienced professionals.

Outreach and Promotion:



- Develop job announcements and promote internally and through various media. Craft compelling job postings for online platforms, social media, and email newsletters.
- Engage with community partners to spread the word. Reach out to other nonprofits, local businesses, and civic organizations to share job openings.
- Consider using targeted online advertising to reach specific demographics or geographic areas.

Screening and Interviews

- Establish a screening committee. Form a diverse committee with representation from different departments or stakeholders within the organization.
- Develop a list of screening questions and interview questions. Tailor questions to assess candidates' experience, leadership style, and alignment with the organization's mission.
- Conduct initial interviews and select top candidates for final interviews with the Board. Use video interviews or phone screenings to efficiently narrow down the candidate pool before inviting finalists for in-person interviews with the Board or selection committee.



Selection and Onboarding



- Conduct reference and background checks. Verify candidates' qualifications, employment history, and character references.
- Make the job offer. Clearly communicate the offer including salary, benefits, and start date, and provide sufficient time for candidates to consider and negotiate.
- Develop an onboarding plan to introduce the new Executive Director to the organization. Provide orientation sessions, introductions to key staff and stakeholders, and resources to support the transition.

Additional Strategies



- Emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion. Actively seek out candidates from underrepresented backgrounds and ensure that the hiring process is fair and inclusive.
- Offer professional development opportunities. Highlight opportunities for growth and advancement within the organization to attract candidates who are looking for long-term career prospects.
- Maintain open communication. Keep candidates informed throughout the hiring process and provide feedback even to those who are not selected, to uphold the organization's reputation and foster positive relationships within the community.

What's Next?

Hopefully this gets you off to a good start. As you use this resource to develop the recruiting plan for your Executive Director, know that this is not a set of instructions but rather a framework that can be molded and adapted to fit your organization's unique needs and goals. It is important to remember that human resources is regulated by federal, state, and local laws that are updated regularly.

Begin to think about where you would do outreach and promotion for the Executive Director role within your community.