

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

by Jan Masaoka

At a recent gathering of nonprofit CEOs (executive directors) it was amazing how many people didn't have job descriptions - and almost no one had one that had been recently updated. Too often boards only look at the executive director's job description when they're unhappy with their executive or when they're hiring a new one. If you're writing or rewriting a job description, it may be helpful to have one for comparison. I've taken my job description as executive director of CompassPoint Nonprofit Services - one of the Board Cafe's co-publishers - and made it a bit more "generic" to serve as a template. Whatever job description you use, test to see that it both provides everyday guidance for the executive director and can serve as an evaluation tool at the end of the year. AND be sure to revisit and revise the job description as the job and the organization change.

Executive Director

The Executive Director is the Chief Executive Officer of _____. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors, and is responsible for the organization's consistent achievement of its mission and financial objectives. In program development and administration, the Executive Director will:

Specific committee responsibilities:

1. Assure that the organization has a long-range strategy which achieves its mission, and toward which it makes consistent and timely progress.
2. Provide leadership in developing program, organizational and financial plans with the Board of Directors and staff, and carry out plans and policies authorized by the board.
3. Promote active and broad participation by volunteers in all areas of the organization's work.
4. Maintain official records and documents, and ensure compliance with federal, state and local regulations.
5. Maintain a working knowledge of significant developments and trends in the field.

In communications, the Executive Director will:

1. See that the board is kept fully informed on the condition of the organization and all important factors influencing it.

2. Publicize the activities of the organization, its programs and goals.
3. Establish sound working relationships and cooperative arrangements with community groups and organizations.
4. Represent the programs and point of view of the organization to agencies, organizations, and the general public.

In relations with staff, the Executive Director will:

1. Be responsible for the recruitment, employment, and release of all personnel, both paid staff and volunteers.
2. Ensure that job descriptions are developed, that regular performance evaluations are held, and that sound human resource practices are in place.
3. See that an effective management team, with appropriate provision for succession, is in place.
4. Encourage staff and volunteer development and education, and assist program staff in relating their specialized work to the total program of the organization.
5. Maintain a climate which attracts, keeps, and motivates a diverse staff of top quality people.

In budget and finance, the Executive Director will:

1. Be responsible for developing and maintaining sound financial practices.
2. Work with the staff, Finance Committee, and the board in preparing a budget; see that the organization operates within budget guidelines.
3. Ensure that adequate funds are available to permit the organization to carry out its work.
4. Jointly, with the president and secretary of the board of directors, conduct official correspondence of the organization, and jointly, with designated officers, execute legal documents.

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