

Organization:	
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Organizational Effectiveness Assessment

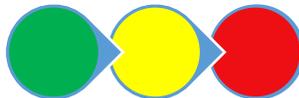
What are the most important indicators of organizational effectiveness in each of the three main foci of an organization – program, people and money? What benchmarks should you strive for under each?

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

1. Clarity of Vision. *A strong organization has a clear focus. They have a unique purpose and are keenly aware of it, and they are able to effectively communicate it to others. The result is that the organization stays focused on the programs and opportunities that best serve their overall vision.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does your board, staff and key volunteers know the organization's niche well, and have a lot of pride in your organization's vision?	
Do you consistently communicate internally your vision and how it translates into short and long-term goals?	
Does your website and other external communications reinforce the same story?	
As new opportunities emerge, do you apply a strong filter and review opportunities to make sure that they are in alignment with your vision?	
Are you seen as experts in your issue area(s)?	
Are you the "key player" within your niche?	

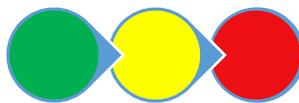
Does the organization have a clear vision? Do you communicate it effectively? Do you effectively manage new opportunities to stay aligned with your vision?



2. SWOT Analysis. *Before embarking on any strategic planning, an effective organization carefully reviews the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). They get input from board, staff, and key volunteers, but also from other key stakeholders and community members. By broadening the input, they make sure that they have not fallen into myopic perspectives.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Has the organization conducted a comprehensive SWOT analysis within the last 2-3 years?	
Did you get input from Board, staff, and key volunteers?	
Did you also get input from key stakeholders and other community members?	
Does the staff and Board revisit the SWOT analysis at least annually?	
Do staff and Board articulate the same organizational strengths and weaknesses?	
Are potential opportunities and threats reviewed regularly at staff and Board meetings and is the organization ready for what lies ahead?	

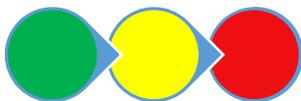
Has the organization weighed your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?



3. Strategic Thinking and Planning. *An effective organization has translated their mission and vision into clear medium to long-term strategies. Their strategy drives their actions at all levels of the organization. They use a Theory of Change, Strategic Framework or Strategic Plan to guide their annual planning and their decision-making. They are clear on their desired outcomes and they evaluate their progress towards these outcomes.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does the organization have a strategic plan, strategic framework and/or theory of change that is current (less than 3 years old)?	
Do you regularly refer to these strategic documents during staff and board meetings?	
Do you use the strategic plan to pull down goals and objectives in to your annual operating plans and quarterly work plans?	
Does the plan include measurable outcomes and objectives and do you conduct regular evaluations of your work relative to these outcomes?	
Does the strategic plan include a “business plan” or fund development plan so that you know that your work is sustainable?	
As external and internal situations change do you update and revise your plans and strategic frameworks?	

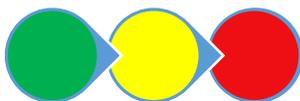
Does the organization have a strategic plan, strategic framework, and/or theory of change? Do you use, update, and evaluate it?



4. Campaign Effectiveness. *An effective organization can both proactively and reactively influence policy-making. While they may not always be able to produce a win in the short-run, they can put issues on the agenda for policy-making, and by effectively building support over time, ultimately they can be successful. And, at the culmination of a big campaign effort, an effective organization finds itself in a stronger position than when it started – regardless of whether or not it was successful.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Is the organization having success at the local, state/provincial, or national level?	
Are you building support and making headway towards your longer-term objectives?	
Are your staff the primary leaders in the coalitions and campaigns that they are involved in? Are they able to put their issues on policy-makers' agendas?	
Has your campaign work resulted in even more seasoned staff and volunteers who are resilient and ready for the next campaign?	
Has your campaign work resulted in a better reputation and more visibility? Has it strengthened relationships with partners and decision-makers?	
Has your campaign work strengthened you financially? Is it sustainable?	

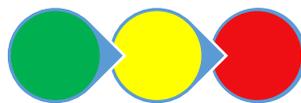
Does the organization impact policy decisions? Is your campaign work sustainable – do you undertake and manage campaigns and coalitions in a way that makes the organization stronger and more resilient, rather than depleting the organization?



5. Community Engagement. *In strong organizations, considering community impact and involving community members is integrated into each aspect of program management from assessing opportunities and threats, to creating strategies and desired outcomes, to devising and implementing campaigns. They understand the need to build strong long-lasting relationships with a broad set of communities. They use a ladder of engagement to deepen volunteers experience and impact.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does the organization have community members who act as partners, working together towards the organization's vision?	
If issues and programs are controversial, do you consistently look to find areas of common ground?	
Do you move volunteers up the ladder of engagement? Do you have some super-volunteers who help you engage other community members?	
Do you give your volunteers clear expectations, job descriptions and feedback? Do you recognize and celebrate your volunteers?	
Does your SWOT analysis, strategic plan and campaign plan address the need to broaden your support and bring in more diverse communities?	

Does the organization have effective strategies for community engagement? Are you engaging diverse communities and building solid relationships? Are you working effectively with volunteers?



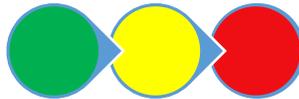
PEOPLE ASSESSMENT

6. Strong Leadership. *Effective organizations are led by strong leaders who can give focus and strategic direction to the staff and to the organization overall. Strong leaders have the emotional intelligence required to work effectively with the staff and Board – listening, handling conflict, and bringing out the best in others. They also are effective at recruiting staff and building high-functioning teams. An effective organization knows that "your people are your strongest asset." The organization has staff that are real gems and the organization's leaders enable those staff to work to their full potential.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does your leadership effectively communicate vision and strategy? Are they inspiring?	
Have your leaders aligned the work of the staff to the vision and strategy so that staff stay motivated and focused, and each staffer makes a big contribution to the combined effort?	
Are the leaders good at identifying, recruiting, and onboarding high performing staff?	

Do the leaders of the organization foster team work and collaboration amongst the staff?	
Are the leaders of the organization emotionally intelligent? Are they self-aware, are they effective listeners, and are they effective at handling conflict?	
Is the leadership of the organization focused on continuous learning and development for themselves, and in fostering this for others?	
Do the leaders hold all staff accountable?	
Do the leaders of the organization adapt to changing conditions?	
Does the ED have an internal support structure? If the organization's size warrants it, is there a strong and effective leadership team in place?	

Is the leadership of the organization able to build and motivate a team around the organization's vision, values and strategies in such a way that they bring out everyone's best work?



7. Positive Culture. *A positive culture includes support for individual and team learning, innovation, accountability, trust, inclusion, and fun. In an effective organization, staff share ideas and support each other. Each person is invested in each other's success.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Do staff willingly give and receive feedback, and have tough and honest conversations when needed?	
Do staff admit when they don't know something, or when they make a mistake? Do they ask for help?	
Do staff handle conflict effectively? Do they attempt to uncover and acknowledge conflict? Do they establish ground rules for productively engaging in conflict and debate? Do they agree to act on final decisions, even if they are not in agreement?	
Does the organization support the staff's development with resources for ongoing learning?	
Does the organization reward improvising, creativity, and appropriate risk-taking?	
Does the staff work together in teams? Do the staff meet together and spend time to learn about each other's backgrounds and interests? Do they have fun?	
Is organizational knowledge preserved and shared?	
Is the culture inclusive? Are differences in perspective, background, experience, culture, and communication style acknowledged and appreciated?	

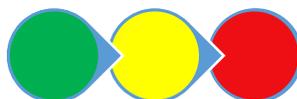
Is the organizational culture based on honesty and trust, inclusion, innovation, and support of individual and team learning?



8. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. *An effective organization has an active Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiative which is championed by the leaders of the organization.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Has the organization developed a set of inclusive behaviors? Do you live by them? Do you refer to those regularly in staff meetings and consider them in staff evaluations?	
Does the organization have a public DEI statement on their webpage? Do the Board and staff refer to it?	
Has the organization reviewed their internal and external policies and communications through a lens of inclusivity and cultural awareness?	
When planning events, programs, and outreach, does the organization look for opportunities to expand your constituents and partners, and to build bridges to new communities?	
If staff hiring, does the organization use outreach, hiring and onboarding processes that generate and promotes diversity?	
Does the organization have an active DEI committee, is the DEI championed by the leaders in the organization?	
Does the organization have a diverse staff and Board of Directors-- diverse in terms of race, cultural heritage, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and other dimensions?	

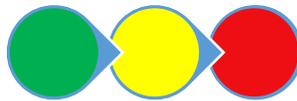
Does the organization have a DEI vision and a plan and are they moving towards greater Diversity, Equity and Inclusion with their staff, Board, constituents, and programs?



9. Resiliency. *The staff of an effective organization can see themselves working for the organization long-term. They have a life-work balance that is sustainable. And when there is turnover, it is handled with adequate training and transition time.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Do the staff love their work, and at the same time, do they keep a steady life-work balance?	
Do the leaders model resiliency?	
Do staff come back from vacation time rejuvenated and ready to jump into their work?	
Do staff think about their responsibilities to the organization over a long period, thinking about impacts and improvements over three to five years rather than months?	
Some turnover is unavoidable. Does the organization have contingency plans in place and some redundancy in core functions?	
When turnover occurs, do staff give adequate notice so that the organization can put the transition plan into place?	
Do replacement staff step into an organization that was well prepared for the transition?	
Does the organization have a succession plan for the ED?	

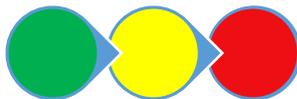
Are staff engaged and resilient, and committed long-term? Is turnover handled with adequate training and transition time?



10. People Systems. *In an effective organization, personnel systems are in place that serve both management and the employee. The systems reflect shared values and insure equitable treatment for all the staff.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does the organization have clear and transparent personnel policies – and consistent application of those policies – so that staff know they are being treated fairly?	
Do the staff have current written job descriptions and work plans?	
Do staff know what is expected of them and do they produce work plans that jive with those expectations?	
Are staff appreciative of receiving both ongoing and annual evaluations so that they can continue to grow as individuals and employees?	
Is external salary data used to make sure that competitive salaries are being paid? Do you have benefits established that enable staff to stay with the organization long-term?	
Does the organization comply with labor laws including rules about over time and employee vs contractor?	

Does the organization have “people systems” in place like personnel policies, job descriptions, annual work plans and evaluations? Do you have competitive total compensation?

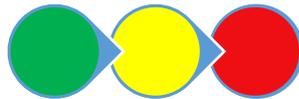


11. An Effective Board. *In a strong and effective organization, the Board provides strategic leadership. They understand their role is in governance, not management. They are active, and there to lend a hand, even though many times a lighter touch is all that is needed.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does the Board keep an eye on the long-term, making sure the organization is sustainable and taking the most strategic path forward? Do they add value to planning and decision-making?	

Do all the Board members financially contribute? Do they help raise money for the organization?	
Is there a strong Board Chair? Do they have a good working relationship with the ED?	
Are there term limits for Board members? Does the organization have a Board member succession plan and a thoughtful orientation for new members?	
Does the Board set clear expectations for the Executive Director and do they conduct an annual evaluation of them? Does the Board evaluate itself?	
Do materials for Board meetings go out to members 1 - 2 weeks before the meeting – including agenda, minutes, program updates, budgets and financials?	

Does the organization have an active board providing strategic leadership and effective governance?



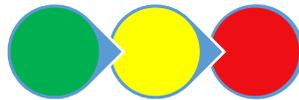
MONEY ASSESSMENT

12. Sustainable Programs. *In an effective organization, the annual budget is prepared by program area. The staff and Board know which of the organization's programs are funded and sustainable, and which are being subsidized by general support funds. Programs that are not core to the organization's mission and are not funded are cutback.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does the organization assign shared costs to each program so that you see the full and accurate costs for running each of your programs?	
Do you evaluate the surplus or deficit for each of the program areas?	
Do you cut back on programs that deficit and are not core to the mission of the organization?	

Do you use this cost center approach to evaluate new funding opportunities to make sure they make sense for the organization overall?	
Do you prepare multiple budget scenarios – worst case to program expansion scenarios – to see the impact of raising more or less revenue?	

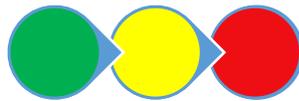
Does the organization have adequate funds for the programs they have planned? Do you evaluate programs as cost centers and do budgeting and planning by program area?



13. Financial Reserves. *A strong organization has consciously and carefully built up their unrestricted reserves such that they have 3 - 6 months of operating monies available should they need it.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does the organization have unrestricted reserves equal to at least 3 months of operating funds?	
If you have the minimum of 3 months of operating funds, are you working to add to it by consistently budgeting for a surplus?	
Do you have funds for special needs such as Board restricted funds, new initiative funds, and endowment accounts? Do you have plans to build these reserve funds?	
Does the organization protect its assets with adequate insurance, including general liability, directors and officers, workers' compensation and unemployment?	

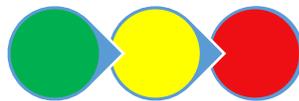
Does the organization have adequate money saved in unrestricted reserves?



14. Financial Management. *An effective organization has accurate and timely financial reporting and competent fiscal oversight. The fiscal manager works as part of a team, along with the Executive Director, Treasurer and other members of the Board to oversee the organization's finances.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Do the financial reports serve the planning and oversight needs of the Executive Director and the Board?	
Does the ED review the financial reports each month and the Board at least quarterly?	
Does the ED use cash flow projections to monitor your financial position?	
Does the Treasurer make sure the Board is looking out for the long-term financial sustainability of the organization?	
Does the organization insure proper fiscal control by having multiple people involved in check preparation, check signing, and bank statement review and reconciliation?	
Is the fiscal manager/bookkeeper adequately informed about changes to income streams and planned expenses?	
Does the organization have an annual audit by a qualified CPA? Do you prepare and submit required reports on time?	
Does the organization lock up sensitive paper files, and are computer files backed-up regularly?	

**Does the organization have competent fiscal oversight and accurate financial reporting?
Do you have strong people doing appropriate fiscal functions in the Fiscal Manager,
Executive Director, and Treasurer roles?**

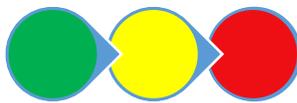


15. Diversified Income Sources. *In fund development, a strong organization plays to their strengths and they don't rest on their laurels. They pursue income from a variety of sources using strategies that have proven successful for them.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Has the organization identified which fund development strategies you excel at and/or have the most potential for your organization?	

Do you build upon those successful strategies by identifying additional, similar income sources?	
Has the organization developed a compelling case for support?	
Is the organization effective at retaining grants? Major donors? Small donors?	
Does the organization have an acquisition strategy?	
Do you acknowledge gifts and recognize and celebrate donors?	
Do you have a robust database?	

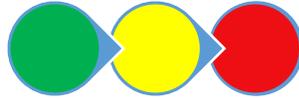
Does the organization have an effective approach to diversify the sources of your income? Have you taken full-advantage of your proven, effective fund development strategies to include a multitude of sources?



16. Fund Development Plan. *In an effective organization, the fund development plan is one of the organization's key documents. It is current and accurate. It is developed with input from all staff and Board.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does the organization have a current fund development plan?	
Is the plan realistic?	
Was the plan developed by a team of people – board, program staff, Executive Director, as well as development staff?	
Does everyone in the organization know what is in the plan and are they invested in it?	
Has the organization allocated enough people and financial resources to make sure they can implement the plan?	
Do you review the plan on an ongoing basis for any necessary changes and for comparison to actual results?	

Does the organization have a current fund development plan? Was it developed with input from development staff, Executive Director, program staff, and Board?



17. Fund Development Team. *In an effective organization, when it comes to fund development, everyone plays a part. Program staff, ED, Board, and volunteers all are involved in fundraising. The development staff are supported and turnover is infrequent.*

Considerations:	Comments:
Does the ED make time for the fund development activities that play to their strengths and contribute the most to the overall effort?	
Does the Board know exactly what they are expected to do, and do they hold each other accountable for doing the work?	
Do program staff initiate innovative fund development activities which bolster their program plans?	
Do the development staff understand that whether or not they make their income projections for the year is up to everyone?	
Do development staff do a combination of steering the work of others and doing the work themselves; are they happy with the balance?	
Is fund development work celebrated in the organization?	

Are people in your organization doing fund development besides just the development staff, including program staff, ED, board, and volunteers? Is the development staff resilient and turnover infrequent?

