

# The Five Life Stages Of Nonprofit Organizations: Where You Are, Where You're Going, And What To Expect

**BOARD-STAFF INTERACTION:**

**YOU ASK, WE ANSWER**

Anyone new to working at a nonprofit may find themselves wondering what his or her role is in relationship to the board — that entity that has ultimate responsibility for the organization. Can you expect to occasionally see board members around the office and, if so, how should you interact with them? Will you be expected to take direction from them? To collaborate with them on projects? Or are there invisible lines drawn somewhere that delineate the board's role and the staff's role — lines that should not be crossed?

These are all good and valid questions — with no one correct answer! The partnership between the board and the CEO or executive director and the board and the staff can be complicated and tricky to navigate at times — and will fluctuate based on where the organization is in its lifecycle and, sometimes, on the personalities of its key players.

Since its founding, BoardSource has fielded hundreds of questions related to the board-staff partnership. While most center on the board-chief executive partnership, many touch on the relationship between the board and staff. Some of the questions are general in nature; others address specific issues and can be quite thorny in nature. In an effort to help those who work at a nonprofit determine what role they play in the board-staff partnership, we present a few of those questions here.

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**Q:** What are the primary roles of the board, the CEO, and supporting staff?

When defining the role of the board, it is important to remember that it refers to the group, not to individual board members. The board functions as a team. Individual board members inherently have no authority — no individual rights — over the organization but must assume accountability for their own actions. The full governing body has three main foci:

- **Direction:** The board guards the mission of the organization and, through guidelines, steers it in the right direction.
- **Oversight:** The board monitors the activities, the health, and the ethical behavior in the organization.
- **Resources:** The board ensures that the organization is well-equipped to fulfill its mission, i.e., has adequate finances, capable staff, and an esteemed reputation.

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The Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations. Where You Are, Where You're Going, and What to Expect When You Get There. Judith Sharken Simon with J. Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations: Where You Are, Where You're Going, and What to Expect When You Get There. Home Off the Shelf The Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations: Where You Are, Where You're Going, and What to Expect When You Get There. Front Cover. Judith Sharken. The Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations -- Where You Are, Where You're Going, and What to Expect When You Get There. Summary: This guide helps. Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations Where You Are, Where You're Going, and What to Expect When You Get There. Author: Judith Sharken Simon. The Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations: Where You Are, Where You're Going, and What to Expect When You Get There by Judith Sharken Simon. Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations: Where You Are, Where You're Going, and What to Expect When You Get There. by Judith Sharken. \*\*The 5 Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations by Judith Sharken Simon with J. Terence Donovan Primary question: How are we going to pull this off? organizations to be as viable as possible they will need to operate in modes that promote Sometimes it happens-an organization is forced or chooses to shut its doors. Quoted from The Five Stages of Nonprofit Organizations: Where You Are, Where You're Going and What to Expect When You Get There by Judith Sharken. Growing Up: The Five Life Stages of Non-Profit Organizations, International They have a green (we're going to need some information). itzabem.com: Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations: Where You Are, Where You're Going, and What to Expect When You Get There: pages.

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