

Nonprofit Capacity Self-Assessment Checklists

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I. COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
<p>1. Our nonprofit has a clear, concise communications statement.</p> <p>Our communications statement includes our mission statement, and may provide additional information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What we are trying to accomplish• Our strategies for making this happen• Our nonprofit's capabilities for doing this• How we know if we are making progress• What we have you accomplished so far				
<p>2. Our nonprofit has identified the audiences that we communicate with and the goal of our communications with each audience.</p>				

COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
3. Our nonprofit knows the message it wants to send to each audience.				
4. Our nonprofit has selected communications formats that are appropriate for reaching the audiences we with whom we want to communicate.				
5. If we are using email and social media for communications, we are using it in an effective manner.				
6. We have established partnerships with other organizations to help us with our communications.				
7. We have a communications plan that includes all communications-related activities, makes assignments and sets timelines.				
8. We regularly review our communications plan and update it as necessary.				

II. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
<i>Budget development</i>				
1. Our nonprofit has a budget.				
2. The Executive Director and senior management are involved in developing the budget.				
3. There is a process for formally approving the budget.				
4. If our nonprofit receives restricted income, this is shown in the budget.				
5. Our nonprofit regularly				

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
monitors our income and expenditures in comparison to the budget.				
<i>Bookkeeping</i>				
6. We have an automated system for tracking income and expenditures (QuickBooks for nonprofits or similar system); at a minimum Excel-based system.				
7. Someone is designated to record all financial transactions.				
8. All income is recorded.				
9. All expenditures are recorded and receipts are kept for all expenditures.				
<i>Financial reports</i>				
10. We develop a monthly income statement.				
11. We develop cash flow projections.				
12. We check with major donors to make sure we comply with their financial reporting requirements.				
<i>Audits</i>				
13. Our nonprofit has regular audits by a CPA.				
<i>Financial controls</i>				
14. Our Board has adopted policies outlining financial controls for the nonprofit.				
15. Our nonprofit has more than one person involved in most financial transactions.				
16. Our financial assets are secured under lock and key, with only authorized persons able to access them.				
17. Access to electronic financial data is password				

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
protected, with only authorized persons able to access it.				
18. Electronic financial data is backed up and stored on the cloud or at an off-site location.				
19. Responsibilities for financial transactions are clearly described in writing, so it is clear who is responsible for each type of financial transaction. Responsibilities for financial management are included in employees' job descriptions.				

III. FUNDRAISING

FUNDRAISING PROGRAM CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
1. Our nonprofit has a Fundraising Plan, including the following parts:				
a. A case statement				
b. A fundraising target				
c. Identification of donor categories that our nonprofit will pursue				
d. Targets for the number and amount of donations for each donor category				
e. Identified fundraising strategies for each donor category				
f. Fundraising message(s) customized to address the interests and concerns of donor				

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FUNDRAISING PROGRAM CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
categories we are targeting				
2. If our nonprofit does not have a Fundraising Plan, or if our Fundraising Plan is incomplete or outdated, we have a detailed action plan for completing a Fundraising Plan				
3. We are familiar with applicable law on fundraising by nonprofits.				
4. Everyone involved with fundraising for our nonprofit knows how to communicate our fundraising messages. This includes not only employees, but volunteers, long-time donors and others who may “spread the word” about our nonprofit.				
5. We have carefully considered our choice of fundraising strategies, analyzing the benefits and potential risks of each strategy.				
6. If we are considering applying for a grant, we have thoroughly researched potential donor organizations.				
7. If we are applying for a grant, we have a detailed timetable for grant preparation, with responsibilities clearly assigned.				
8. We have a donor database that includes current, past and prospective donors.				
9. We use Client Relationship Management (CRM) software to manage our donor stewardship program and track communications with current and prospective				

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FUNDRAISING PROGRAM CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
donors.				
10. All donors receive receipts and written communications thanking them for their donations.				
11. Donors receive periodic updates and information from our nonprofit.				
12. We use additional means of acknowledging major donors, such as mention in our reports, social networking site, articles, certificates, etc.				
13. We work with major donors to assure that the information provided to them meets their needs.				
14. We proactively identify and address potential ethical concerns regarding our fundraising activities.				
15. We evaluate our fundraising results and make adjustments as needed.				

IV. GOVERNANCE

GOVERNANCE CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
<i>Staff Organization and Responsibilities</i>				
1. We have developed job descriptions for the Executive Director and other management positions.				
2. Our nonprofit has an organization chart.				
3. There are systems in place for both formal and informal communications				

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GOVERNANCE CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
between the executive director and managers, and among managers.				
4. Staff are given opportunities to develop their leadership skills.				
<i>Board Governance</i>				
5. Our nonprofit understands the functions of the board of directors.				
6. Our nonprofit understands the responsibilities of individual members of the board of directors.				
7. The relationship and responsibilities of the executive director and the board are clearly defined.				
8. Our nonprofit has a charter (also known as by-laws).				
9. Our nonprofit has board policies.				
10. Before recruiting board members, we determine what knowledge and skills we need on the board.				
11. Our nonprofit has job descriptions for board members.				
12. Our nonprofit has an established process for recruiting board members.				
13. We always use an agenda for board meetings.				
14. We send the agenda and materials to board members in advance of the meeting, with the expectation that they review them carefully.				
15. We start and end board meetings on time.				
16. We have considered creating an advisory				

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GOVERNANCE CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
board or council in addition to our governing board.				
17. There are systems in place for both formal and informal communications between the executive director and the board.				
18. The board evaluates the executive director's performance.				
19. Our nonprofit understands legal requirements that apply to 501(c)3 organizations.				
20. Our nonprofit is in full compliance with applicable legal requirements.				

V. HUMAN RESOURCES

HUMAN RESOURCES CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
a. A person in our nonprofit is designated with lead responsibility for human resources.				
b. We periodically review the tasks we need to carry out. We make sure that we have the right positions to carry out those tasks, and that the work is supervised to make sure it is carried out as intended.				
c. There are written job descriptions for every position, describing job duties and expectations and needed qualifications for the job.				
d. There is a written process for filling jobs, including				

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HUMAN RESOURCES CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
application process, interviewing, reference and background checks, and hiring.				
e. Salaries and benefits are periodically reviewed to ensure competitiveness and fairness.				
f. All employees receive an Employee Handbook with important policies in areas such as workplace rules, compensation, performance evaluations and disciplinary processes.				
g. All new employees receive orientation.				
h. There are opportunities for continuing education for employees.				
i. There are regularly scheduled performance reviews for all employees.				
j. The nonprofit does not discriminate. It is in compliance with all legal and donor requirements regarding diversity and non-discrimination.				
k. The nonprofit takes steps to engage and motivate employees.				

VI. OPERATIONAL (ACTION) PLANNING

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OPERATIONAL PLANNING CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
1. Our nonprofit has an operational plan, which it uses to guide its daily activities.				
2. If we have a strategic plan, our operational plan support strategies in the strategic plan.				
3. We include “getting stakeholder feedback” as an activity in our operational plan.				
4. There is a measurable goal for each activity included in the operational plan.				
5. If we have a strategic plan, the measurable goals support SMART objectives from the strategic plan.				
6. The operational plan identifies tasks that must be completed to implement each activity.				
7. People are assigned responsibility for each task that needs to be carried out.				
8. Start dates and end dates are set for each task that needs to be carried out.				
9. Needed resources are identified for each task.				
10. We use a Gantt chart to visually describe activities, tasks, assignments and timelines.				
11. Staff members are knowledgeable and engaged in the operational planning				

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OPERATIONAL PLANNING CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
process.				
12. A process is in place for regularly reviewing progress in carrying out the operational plan.				
13. If it is found that tasks in the operational plan are not carried out as intended, the reasons for problems are identified and needed changes are made.				

VII. PROGRAM EVALUATION

PROGRAM EVALUATION CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
1. Our nonprofit understands what program evaluation is and why it is important.				
2. Our nonprofit understands the difference between outcome evaluation and process evaluation.				
3. Our nonprofit conducts an annual beneficiary survey and uses the results to help determine its effectiveness.				
4. Our nonprofit has a process for selecting programs for evaluation.				
5. Our nonprofit uses a logframe for planning the program evaluation.				
6. Our nonprofit makes sure that data and information needed to conduct the evaluation is identified when the evaluation is planned, and that it is collected on an ongoing basis.				
7. Our nonprofit regularly conducts program				

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PROGRAM EVALUATION CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
evaluations.				
8. One or more people are assigned to conduct the evaluation. Sufficient staff time is allotted to conduct the evaluation or respond to questions from an external evaluator.				
9. Our nonprofit shares written reports on its evaluation findings with its staff, board, donors, clients, and other community stakeholders.				
10. Our nonprofit uses evaluation findings to improve its programs.				

VIII. RISK MANAGEMENT

RISK MANAGEMENT CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
1. We have systematically identified risks our nonprofit faces. We have prioritized them according to their likelihood and the potential damage they could cause.				
2. We have identified and implemented risk management measures to protect against the highest priority risks.				
3. We encourage our employees and volunteers to report risks, and we follow-up when they do so.				
4. We have written policies that address risk (for example, policies on automobile use; policies on cash management, etc.)				

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RISK MANAGEMENT CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
5. We provide training to employees and volunteers on risk prevention.				
6. We have purchased insurance, where appropriate, to protect against fire, flood or liability.				

IX. Strategic Planning

STRATEGIC PLANNING CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
Our nonprofit has a formal strategic plan.				
Our nonprofit has a written vision statement.				
Our nonprofit has a written mission statement.				
Our nonprofit regularly solicits input from beneficiaries.				
Our nonprofit regularly solicits input from stakeholders other than beneficiaries, such as staff, volunteers, partners, donors, community members and government.				
Our nonprofit has used SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities. It has used this information to identify strategies.				
Our nonprofit has identified strategies for achieving its mission.				
Our nonprofit has identified SMART objectives.				
Our nonprofit has a measurement plan for tracking progress on achieving SMART objectives.				
We periodically review the strategic plan to check on our progress.				
We share the strategic plan with				

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STRATEGIC PLANNING CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
board, staff, volunteers, donors, beneficiaries and community members.				
Our nonprofit has an operational (action) plan that describes how the strategic plan will be implemented.				
Our nonprofit has developed a logic model.				

X. VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
a. There is an individual responsible for coordinating the volunteer program.				
b. Decisions on what functions should be carried out by volunteers and what functions should be carried out by paid staff are made carefully based on the nonprofit's needs.				
c. There are written job descriptions for every volunteer position, describing job duties and expectations and needed qualifications for the job.				
d. There are clear, written procedures for volunteer recruitment.				
e. All new volunteers receive orientation to the nonprofit.				
f. Volunteer performance is evaluated, and the nonprofit				

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM CAPACITY COMPONENT	ACHIEVED	PARTIALLY ACHIEVED	NOT PRESENT	COMMENTS
communicates with volunteers about how they are doing. It solicits ideas from volunteers for improving operations of the nonprofit.				
g. Steps are taken to make the volunteer experience rewarding and worthwhile for volunteers, and to express appreciation for their efforts.				

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