

The nonprofit sector is nothing if not resourceful. Programs are often run on shoestring budgets, employees are meant to wear many hats and financial constraints are ever present. Yet the sector attracts incredible talent, dedicated to the meaningful work of driving positive change in society.

It is the impactful work that draws people to follow a career in nonprofit, or to leave more financially lucrative corporate roles for something 'more meaningful'. While motivations for joining a nonprofit may be unique to the sector, we believe that employees' desire for professional growth is universal and that nonprofits can offer a dynamic and sustainable career track. Smaller nonprofits typically do not have the luxury of hiring staff with specialized support skills, such as human resources. These areas are often left to the CEO as most team members are focused on program delivery.

As CEOs of three small-sized organizations, we came together to explore best practices and innovative approaches to talent development with the aim of raising the bar for each of our teams, and sharing our learning with peer organizations. We enlisted the expertise of Emily Woodward from executive search and talent management firm Leathwaite who volunteered her time with us—many hours over six months—to help guide our process. We are forever grateful for Emily's support. We trialed the competency

framework within our organizations for one year and then revised it to how it is set out in this document. We would also like to express our appreciation to Timmy Ho from Macquarie Group for his support in the design of this resource.

This document provides a set of five core competencies that we developed for our teams. Core competencies are a set of knowledge, skills and capabilities that help guide employees to be successful within an organization. The competencies identify specific employee behaviors and are meant to provide clarity on expectations of a position. They play a critical role in the process of reviewing an employee's performance, development and advancement. Where key performance indicators (KPIs) typically outline quantifiable goals for an individual—the 'what' of the work—the competencies offer more of a roadmap on 'how' the work is done. We believe both are important.

This framework was developed with the overall needs, motivations and job bands of nonprofit organizations in mind, particularly small to medium-sized ones. Nonprofits share many of the same attributes and needs as for-profit companies, such as a focus on culture and values, aligning with strategic objectives, meeting financial goals and developing staff. However, the mission-driven nature of nonprofit organizations adds a layer of competency around organizational purpose. This competency also reflects the unique nature of nonprofit employee motivations that often place a higher value on purpose over profit.

We also recognize the unique role of volunteers who comprise a vital part of nonprofit operations. For the purposes of this framework, competencies around managing others relate to directly managing paid staff, as well as the ability to manage volunteers, committee members and board directors. Similarly, when focusing on resources, this relates not only to financial resources, but also how well employees may utilize other available resources, including pro bono support.

The aim in creating these competencies was to enable greater transparency within the performance management process, fostering trust and clarity among employees, managers and organizational leadership. We have found that a key to success in putting the competencies into practice is ensuring that they are clearly communicated by management and understood by employees. In sharing these competencies beyond our teams, we hope to help other organizations develop and retain their talent and to contribute towards strengthening the nonprofit sector overall. We also hope that for emerging professionals in the sector, the framework can offer an inspirational pathway for growth over their career.

We understand that people development is a journey and not a one-size-fits-all approach, so we welcome you to adapt these competencies as needed for your people and organization. We hope they can be a useful tool, not just at the time of annual performance appraisals, but also during recruitment and in everyday feedback among colleagues. This has been a learning journey for us, and one which is ongoing. We welcome feedback about the framework and its application to your team.



Lucinda Pike



Sue Toomey HandsOn Hong Kong



Victoria Wisniewski Otero Resolve Foundation

Core Competencies

StrategicMindset

Capacity to see the bigger picture and connect the dots through planning, taking calculated risks and optimizing resources.

Stakeholder Management

Influencing internal and external parties through relationship management, collaboration and conflict resolution.

Results Focused

Getting things done through effective goal setting, sound decisionmaking and highquality delivery, on time and within budget.

PeopleDevelopment

Commitment to nurturing and growing others through direct management, talent development and effective communication.

Mission Driven

Upholding organizational values through ambassadorship, acting as a culture carrier and committed to the organization's mission and work.

Associate Officer Manager Director C-suite

EMERGING

- Recognizes the practical realities required for the organization to function sustainably
- Aware of resources available related to their role and thoughtful about their deployment
- Demonstrates an understanding of the context of own contribution to achievement of organizational goals
- Sets short-term goals for themselves and is selfdirected in ongoing planning of their work
- Makes decisions based on the resource implications associated with both opportunities and challenges
- Shows ability to come to a reasoned solution to problems and able to make appropriate contingency plans
- Conceptualizes and adapts plans in line with organizational strategy and changing environments
- Creatively explores and evaluates possibilities to maximize resources for the organization
- Creates plans which consider and support the organizational whole and considers external risk factors
- Respectfully challenges
 long-held organizational
 assumptions by
 presenting wellreasoned proposals and
 plans

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- Creatively maximizes funding opportunities that come their way, yielding impactful results for the team
 - Agilely revises strategy and proposes new direction in response to external environment, appropriately mitigating risk

- Effectively leads, articulates and shares organizational strategy internally and externally
- Drives holistic and sustainable resource optimization initiatives for the organization in the long term
- Navigates crises and risk adeptly and challenges underlying assumptions of what can be achieved within the sector as a whole

Strategic Mindset

EXCELLING

- Demonstrates critical thinking and judgement when establishing priorities and executing activities
- Effectively utilizes resources entrusted to them and identifies and raises concerns appropriately
- Demonstrates curiosity and ability to problemsolve in own role, proactively considering potential options

- Translates organizational objectives into clear, ambitious while realistic targets
- Accountable for the resource implications associated with both opportunities and challenges
- Demonstrates foresight, anticipating future challenges and opportunities; escalating where appropriate
- Able to bring in others and guide them in the planning process, educating them about practical considerations
- Takes specific steps that successfully result in broadened resources for the organization
- Understands critical internal and external issues beyond the current year, setting challenging goals that also offset identified risks
- Takes a wider view, integrating current and future strategic plans with sound evidence and sector understanding
- Proactively incorporates
 future resource
 opportunities into
 strategies and makes
 necessary structural
 changes to ensure
 success
- Able to effectively lead teams through times of crisis and uncertainty with a high degree of independence

- Recognized in the sector for their vision on initiatives that drive systems change in the field
- Identifies and captures previously untapped resources on behalf of organization and sector as a whole
- Able to inspirationally lead the organization and wider industry through major risk and crisis events

Manager Officer Associate Director C-suite EMERGING Maintains positive Reaches out to internal Understands the value Encourages those Develops high-level relationships with and external of building up a diverse around them to build relationships of respective internal and stakeholders to build and wide network and their own networks and influence that lead to external stakeholders relationships of their makes efforts to do so. recognized by others as impactful results for the own volition · Proactively encourages a strong influencer organization Happy to participate as a team member when Creates a collaborative others they manage to

express their opinions

and participate in

Able to identify and

propose some solutions

for possible negotiation

in the face of differences

discussions

Stakeholder Management

EXCELLING

asked to do so and

Accepts that others'

theirs without this

interfering in the work

helpful in their support

opinions may differ from •

- Shares information with other parties appropriately without being explicitly asked to do so
- Demonstrates actions that leverage the power of teamwork to achieve positive results
- Creates common ground and influence with others despite differences of opinion
- Recognizes
 opportunities to build
 relationships beyond
 those specifically
 articulated to them

environment and

mindful of the impact of

their actions on others

Shows empathy and

does not let emotions

get the better of self in

the face of conflict and

adversity

- Understands all of those with interest in each decision and engages each stakeholder appropriately
 Confortable and
- Comfortable and competent in challenging others in a sensitive and constructive manner
- Cultivates a strong network of stakeholders that they can readily tap into towards the benefit of the organization
- Fosters collaboration across a range of different kinds of stakeholders and a variety of settings
- Resolves conflict in a sensitive, constructive and timely manner, escalating where appropriate

- Acts as role model in relation to teamwork and cross-team collaboration
- Does not shy away from conflict but acts as mediator between parties to reach consensus
- Cultivates an atmosphere of mutual respect and fosters partnerships and meaningful collaboration, both internally and externally
- Creates 'win-win' situations in the face of high-stakes conflicts that lead to collectively positive outcomes
- Builds relationships of influence which are recognized by the wider industry
- Encourages open debate and collaboration as the cultural norm for the successful management of projects
- Demonstrates strong emotional intelligence in conflict resolution and calm under pressure
- Able to lead beyond own sector, creating wider systemic change by leveraging powerful networks
- Inspires and innovates transformational teamwork that leaves a positive legacy in the organization
 - Acts as diplomat and negotiator in conflicts, building, maintaining and restoring relationships and alliances for the good of the sector

Officer Manager C-suite Associate Director EMERGING Sets own daily tasks with . Shows accountability for • Clearly sets and Sets appropriate team Sets clear, strategic a degree of stated goals by articulates project goals. goals, considering goals for the independence. Follows effectively monitoring objectives, activities and resources and industry organization that have instructions diligently project execution, plans associated milestones best practice buy-in and motivate Able to make sound Demonstrates complex and acts responsively and processes teams to action Considers options, decision-making, Demonstrates logical choices that have Makes sound decisions thought processes and makes project-wide implications considering long-term in the face of uncertainty readiness to ask for Ensures that projects implications and internal even with no existing recommendations about support where project-related decisions are delivered on time. in and external factors road map to reference Committed to the budget and to a high appropriate Creates systems to Elevates and optimizes standard Expresses determination highest quality and improve quality output quality of delivery of demonstrates effective wider initiatives to break and focus-eager for and increase team results to be achieved in time management to productivity and new grounds for the a timely manner achieve results efficiency organization

Results Focused

EXCELLING

- Paces and prioritizes workload appropriately and finds ways to continually improve
- Makes well-considered decisions, showing awareness of the impact and consequences of decisions
- Takes initiative, meets deadlines and consistently demonstrates strong execution
- Sets and demonstrates ownership over individual goals in line with organizational targets
- Considers options and is comfortable making autonomous decisions where appropriate
- Able to deliver set objectives in spite of challenges or unforeseen circumstances

- Exemplifies ownership over project goals, and shows accountability when following through
- Able to question own assumptions when choosing between different options
- Consistently finds and suggests best-in-class solutions to enable improved project performance
- Sets and revises complex team goals and encourages ownership among team members
- Demonstrates an ability to make both quick decisions and pause to conduct further research where appropriate
- Able to evaluate systems and methods for elevating team performance above industry norms

- Steers goals that have an impact beyond the organization for systemic change or cross-sector collaboration
- Is an effective and inspiring decision-maker in face of unforeseen crisis situations
- Ensures high-quality delivery of wider initiatives to support and raise the bar for the sector

Officer Manager Associate Director C-suite EMERGING Self-aware about own Provides clear direction Holds people Leads by example. Drives effective performance when seeking support accountable for influencing team to work performance Takes on board from other team resiliently and management for the commitments made to constructive feedback members ensure quality and collaboratively to organization, leveraging Demonstrates selfsuccess of work with an open mind and achieve goals internal processes and adjusts as needed awareness of own Recognizes their role in Provides development systems · Communicates clearly strengths and areas of nurturing the opportunities and · Continually seeks to with internal and external development professional improve talent assigns projects to enhance individual and stakeholders alike Exercises discretion and development of those development best demonstrates a respect team strengths practice within they manage for the relevant Communicates long-term Empowers all team organization audience regarding direction and works with members beyond direct . Able to inspire, motivate sharing of information the team to foster a "we reports through clear and reassure through got this" attitude and confident effective, transparent communication and adaptive communication EXCELLING · Comfortable asking for Delegates thoughtfully to • Demonstrates emotional Can effectively bring Consistently able to bring empower others and free help, where appropriate and cultural intelligence together and facilitate out the best Strong team player who self as needed when managing others. groups with diverse performance from Embodies a growth and able to detect and seeks ways to support representation, internally teams, board, mindset and proactively committees and advisors others around them support any performance and externally

People Development

- Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity in communication as needed
- seeks opportunities for learning
- · Adapts communication style and messaging according to situation and audience
- challenges
- Actively seeks and forges new learning and growth opportunities for those they manage
- Recognized as a motivational leader of others in the team

- Cultivates a pipeline of those to be promoted. including clear visibility of areas for development and how the team will function
- **Builds** communication best practice methods and channels for the organization
- Cultivates strong leadership pipeline to enable smooth succession planning
- Role-models authentic communication styles which are highly regarded by industry peers

Associate	Officer	Manager	Director	C-suite
 E M E R G I N G Able to address general questions about the organization's mission and vision Demonstrates an open can-do attitude, and works within the norms of the organization's culture Shows a clear belief an enthusiasm in the purpose of the organization 	mission in context of their personal journey through storytelling • Effectively engenders trust, bringing their best self and consistent professionalism • Demonstrates interest	 Comfortable and capable to assume external speaking opportunities Upholds organizational values in their decision-making and working methods Able to discern which opportunities are mission-aligned 	 Speaks convincingly about the organization i a variety of settings, including improvised situations Acts as a role model for adhering to organizational values when making complex decisions Shows creativity and open-mindedness to steer opportunities to be mission-central 	 able to inspire others to act Architect and caretaker of organizational culture Oversees evolution of mission over time, 'captain of mission ship'
 E X C E L L I N G Effectively communicates organizational vision armission and their role within it Consistently reflects organizational values in 	the missionPositively contributes to cultivating the	organization to a diverse range of audiences	domain, proactively	 Recognized as an organizational ambassador; reputation synonymous with stated mission Instills a positive cultural legacy that transforms

Ensures that projects

mission-aligned

they are working on stay •

those they manage

mission and avoid

strategically to advance

Steers projects

mission creep

reflections, evolves

organizational culture

· Demonstrates courage to

and fosters new norms

make difficult decisions

to uphold organization's

mission

their work

Mindful of keeping the

organizational mission

central to own daily work

organization for years to

Attuned to links between

ecosystem and ensures

organizational relevance

mission and larger

come

	Strategic Mindset	Stakeholder Management	Results Focused	People Development	Mission Driven
	Recognizes the practica realities required for the organization to function sustainably Aware of resources available related to their role and thoughtful about their deployment Demonstrates an understanding of the context of own contribution to achievement of organizational goals	relationships with respective internal and external stakeholders Happy to participate as a	Demonstrates logical thought processes and readiness to ask for support where	performance Takes on board constructive feedback with an open mind and adjusts as needed Communicates clearly with internal and external stakeholders alike	 Able to address general questions about the organization's mission and vision Demonstrates an open, can-do attitude, and works within the norms of the organization's culture Shows a clear belief and enthusiasm in the purpose of the organization
Associate	E X C E L L I N G Demonstrates critical thinking and judgement when establishing priorities and executing activities Effectively utilizes resources entrusted to them and identifies and raises concerns appropriately Demonstrates curiosity and ability to problemsolve in own role, proactively considering	 appropriately without being explicitly asked to do so Demonstrates actions that leverage the power 	 Paces and prioritizes workload appropriately and finds ways to continually improve Makes well-considered decisions, showing awareness of the impact and consequences of decisions Takes initiative, meets deadlines and consistently demonstrates strong execution 	 Comfortable asking for help, where appropriate Strong team player who seeks ways to support others around them Demonstrates awareness and sensitivity in communication as needed 	

potential options

	Strategic Mindset	Stakeholder Management	Results Focused	People Development	Mission Driven
	 E M E R G I N G Sets short-term goals for themselves and is self-directed in ongoing planning of their work Makes decisions based on the resource implications associated with both opportunities and challenges Shows ability to come to a reasoned solution to problems and able to make appropriate contingency plans 	 and external stakeholders to build relationships of their own volition Creates a collaborative environment and mindful of the impact of their actions on others 	 Shows accountability for stated goals by effectively monitoring project execution, plans and processes Considers options, makes recommendations about project-related decisions Committed to the highest quality and demonstrates effective time management to achieve results 	when seeking support from other team members Demonstrates self- awareness of own strengths and areas of development	 Communicates the mission in context of their personal journey through storytelling Effectively engenders trust, bringing their best self and consistent professionalism Demonstrates interest and curiosity in the larger work of the organization
Officer	E X C E L L I N G Translates organization objectives into clear, ambitious while realistic targets Accountable for the resource implications associated with both opportunities and challenges Demonstrates foresight anticipating future challenges and opportunities; escalating where apparentiate.	opportunities to build relationships beyond those specifically articulated to them • Understands all of those with interest in each decision and engages each stakeholder appropriately • Comfortable and competent in	Sets and demonstrates ownership over individual goals in line with organizational targets Considers options and is comfortable making autonomous decisions where appropriate Able to deliver set objectives despite challenges or unforeseen	 Delegates thoughtfully to empower others and free self as needed Embodies a growth mindset and proactively seeks opportunities for learning Adapts communication style and messaging according to situation and audience 	outside the organization when speaking about the mission

circumstances

sensitive and

constructive manner

where appropriate

Strategic People Stakeholder Results Mission Mindset Management **Focused** Development Driven EMERGING Conceptualizes and Understands the value Clearly sets and Holds people Comfortable and adapts plans in line with of building up a diverse articulates project goals. accountable for capable to assume organizational strategy and wide network and objectives, activities and commitments made to external speaking and changing makes efforts to do so associated milestones ensure quality and opportunities environments Proactively encourages Able to make sound success of work Upholds organizational Creatively explores and others they manage to choices that have Recognizes their role in values in their decisionevaluates possibilities to express their opinions project-wide implications nurturing the making and working maximize resources for and participate in Ensures that projects professional methods the organization discussions are delivered on time. in development of those Able to discern which Creates plans which Able to identify and budget and to a high they manage opportunities are propose some solutions mission-aligned consider and support the standard Communicates long-term organizational whole and direction and works with for possible negotiation considers external risk in the face of differences the team to foster a "we factors got this" attitude Manager EXCELLING Able to bring in others Cultivates a strong Exemplifies ownership Demonstrates emotional Adept and persuasive and guide them in the network of stakeholders over project goals, and and cultural intelligence when representing the planning process. that they can readily tap shows accountability when managing others. organization to a diverse educating them about into towards the benefit when following through and able to detect and range of audiences Demonstrates a learning practical considerations of the organization Able to question own support any Takes specific steps that • Fosters collaboration assumptions when performance challenges mindset, instilling successfully result in Actively seeks and across a range of choosing between organizational values in broadened resources for different kinds of different options forges new learning and those they manage the organization stakeholders and a Consistently finds and growth opportunities for • Steers projects Understands critical variety of settings suggests best-in-class those they manage strategically to advance internal and external Resolves conflict in a solutions to enable Recognized as a mission and avoid

sensitive, constructive

and timely manner.

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performance

motivational leader of

others in the team

issues beyond the

current year, setting

challenging goals that

also offset identified

risks

mission creep

Strategic People Stakeholder Results Mission Mindset **Focused** Development Driven Management EMERGING Respectfully challenges Encourages those Sets appropriate team Leads by example, Speaks convincingly long-held organizational around them to build goals, considering influencing team to work about the organization in assumptions by their own networks and resources and industry resiliently and a variety of settings. presenting well-reasoned recognized by others as best practice collaboratively to including improvised proposals and plans a strong influencer Demonstrates complex achieve goals situations Creatively maximizes Acts as role model in decision-making. Provides development Acts as a role model for funding opportunities relation to teamwork and considering long-term opportunities and adhering to that come their way, cross-team collaboration implications and internal assigns projects to organizational values vielding impactful results • Does not shy away from and external factors enhance individual and when making complex for the team conflict but acts as · Creates systems to team strengths decisions Shows creativity and Agilely revises strategy mediator between improve quality output Empowers all team and proposes new parties to reach and increase team members beyond direct open-mindedness to direction in response to productivity and reports through clear steer opportunities to be consensus external environment. efficiency and confident mission-central appropriately mitigating communication risk EXCELLING Takes a wider view, Builds relationships of Sets and revises complex • Can effectively bring Regularly speaks on integrating current and influence which are team goals and together and facilitate behalf of the future strategic plans recognized by the wider encourages ownership groups with diverse organization in public with sound evidence and industry among team members representation, internally domain, proactively Encourages open debate • sector understanding Demonstrates an ability and externally scouting opportunities to and collaboration as the Proactively incorporates to make both quick · Cultivates a pipeline of promote organization those to be promoted. cultural norm for the Actively drives future resource decisions and pause to opportunities into successful management conduct further research including clear visibility reflections, evolves strategies and makes of projects where appropriate of areas for development organizational culture necessary structural Demonstrates strong Able to evaluate systems and how the team will and fosters new norms emotional intelligence in and methods for changes to ensure function Demonstrates courage to conflict resolution and **Builds** communication success elevating team make difficult decisions

performance above

industry norms

best practice methods

and channels for the

organization

Able to effectively lead

teams through times of

crisis and uncertainty

with a high degree of independence

calm under pressure

Director

to uphold organization's

mission

Strategic People Stakeholder Results Mission Mindset Management **Focused** Development Driven EMERGING Effectively leads. Develops high-level Sets clear, strategic Drives effective Sought out as a public articulates and shares relationships of goals for the performance speaker and advocateorganizational strategy influence that lead to organization that have management for the able to inspire others to internally and externally impactful results for the buy-in and motivate organization, leveraging act Drives holistic and organization teams to action internal processes and Architect and caretaker sustainable resource Cultivates an Makes sound decisions systems of organizational culture optimization initiatives atmosphere of mutual in the face of uncertainty . Continually seeks to Oversees evolution of for the organization in respect and fosters even with no existing improve talent mission over time. the long term partnerships and road map to reference development best 'captain of mission ship' Navigates crises and risk meaningful Elevates and optimizes practice within adeptly and challenges collaboration, both quality of delivery of organization Able to inspire, motivate underlying assumptions internally and externally wider initiatives to break . of what can be achieved . Creates 'win-win' new grounds for the and reassure through within the sector as a situations in the face of effective, transparent organization whole high-stakes conflicts that and adaptive lead to collectively communication C-Suite positive outcomes EXCELLING Able to lead beyond own . Recognized in the sector Steers goals that have Consistently able to bring • Recognized as an for their vision on an impact beyond the sector, creating wider out the best organizational initiatives that drive systemic change by organization for systemic performance from ambassador: reputation systems change in the

lead the organization and wider industry through major risk and crisis events

as a whole

Identifies and captures

resources on behalf of

organization and sector

previously untapped

Able to inspirationally

field

- leveraging powerful networks
- Inspires and innovates transformational teamwork that leaves a positive legacy in the organization
- Acts as diplomat and negotiator in conflicts. building, maintaining and restoring relationships and alliances for the good of the sector
- change or cross-sector collaboration
- Is an effective and inspiring decision-maker in face of unforeseen crisis situations
- Ensures high-quality delivery of wider initiatives to support and raise the bar for the sector
- teams, board. committees and advisors
- Cultivates strong leadership pipeline to enable smooth succession planning
- · Role-models authentic communication styles which are highly regarded by industry peers

synonymous with stated mission

- Instills a positive cultural legacy that transforms organization for years to come
- Attuned to links between mission and larger ecosystem and ensures organizational relevance





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