

Nonprofit Leadership and Transitions

May 20, 2025

About DRG

DRG Talent helps purpose-driven organizations find transformative leaders and build strong talent infrastructures. We specialize in leadership recruitment, talent development, organizational assessment, and strategic succession planning to drive growth and success.



50+ talent experts
with diverse
experience



Located in 16
states



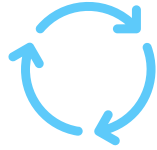
20+ talent
consulting service
s



3000+ talent
engagements

Key Trends in Nonprofit Leadership and Transitions

Increased Leadership Turnover & Lack of Succession Planning



Leadership turnover isn't slowing down

The Government/Non-Profit sector continues to lead in CEO exits, with 493 year-to-date, primarily in the Nonprofit space. This is an increase from 486 in 2023.

In December 2024, there were 55 CEO exits, 52 of which were Non-Profits, up from 34 in November.



Lack of formal succession plans hampers momentum

29% of nonprofits surveyed reported having a written succession plan in place.

Innovative Leadership in Transitions



Co-Leadership structures as a **creative approach** to transitions

More boards **understand their role** in successful transitions

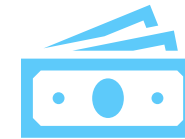
Interim leadership **can provide stability** in a transition

Burnout & Financial Instability



Burnout for leaders and their teams remains a significant issue driving turnover and decreasing organizations' effectiveness

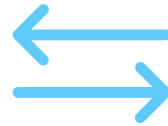
95% of nonprofit leaders cited burnout as a concern, with half feeling more concerned about their own burnout than the previous year



Financial instability and uncertainty are forcing tough choices and consuming leaders' attention

55% of nonprofit leaders indicated that their organizations' financial health was their biggest concern.

Generational Shifts & Evolving Leadership Expectations



With the generational shifts in and out of the nonprofit sector, expectations are shifting **dramatically**.

1

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Leadership
Turnover & Lack
of Succession
Planning

2

Innovative
Leadership in
Transitions

3

Burnout &
Financial
Instability

4

Generational
Shifts & Evolving
Leadership
Expectations

Best Practices for Nonprofit Leadership Transitions



Ongoing

1. Start succession planning **early**.
2. Proactively **fight burnout**.
3. Develop an organizational **strategy**, not static plans.



Before and During the Transition

4. Decide if an **interim leader** is needed – and define their role.
5. Update the **CEO profile and competencies**.
6. Structure the board engagement for a **marathon and a sprint**.
7. Engage stakeholders in a **transition strategy**.



After the Transition

8. Give the new leader a **runway for change**.
9. **Invest** in the new leader.
10. Restart **succession planning**.

Thank You

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