PREVENT

Succession Plan

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# 1.0 Introduction

At PREVENT, we believe that the Executive Director position is a central element in our organization's success. Therefore, ensuring that the functions of the Executive Director are well understood and even shared among senior staff and volunteer leaders is important for safeguarding the organization against unplanned and unexpected change. This kind of risk management is equally helpful in facilitating a smooth leadership transition when it is predictable and planned. In addition, a proactive internal leadership development is also fundamental in our attempt to nurture our staff to take over key leadership positions in our organization as they arise over time.

This document outlines a leadership development and emergency succession plan for PREVENT. It reflects PREVENT's Executive Succession Policy and Procedures and its commitment to sustaining a healthy functioning organization. The purpose of this plan is to also ensure that the organization's leadership has adequate information and a strategy to effectively manage PREVENT in the event the Executive Director is unable to fulfill his or her duties in either the short or long term. The document is divided into 10 sections. Following this introduction is the “get ready” section which focuses on procedures, actions and guidelines to undertake in the event of a planned or emergency departure of the highest executive officer. Section Three provides step by step guidelines on procedures for recruiting for an executive’s replacement. Section Four focuses on actions and guidelines to follow in the event of a permanent, unplanned absence of an executive. Section Five focuses on succession issues in the case of a short term absence of an existing executive. Information that an interim appointee needs to have is shared in Section Seven, while the actual emergency succession plan is outlined in Section Eight. Once an executive is recruited, the post hire information is covered in Section Nine. Section Ten focuses on how PREVENT intends to develop leaders internally and outlines some of these processes.

## 1.1 PREVENT Leadership Commitment

The following summarizes PREVENT’s leadership principles.

* PREVENT seeks to be known as a world leader in innovation in its areas of work and to contribute to state of the art technical leadership in the sectors in which it works.
* Everyone at PREVENT is encouraged to fully develop his/her leadership potential and capacity to contribute to PREVENT’s organizational success in addressing social problems.
* PREVENT has a proven track record and desire to develop and promote leaders from within who demonstrates excellence.
* PREVENT also continues to expand its capabilities and access to new ideas and talent through external recruitment and hiring when appropriate.
* PREVENT needs different kinds of leaders including those who:
  + Combine professional expertise in their respective areas with business development and management expertise,
  + Lead from advanced technical competence and expertise,
  + Provide superior leadership in programs, management and /or administration,
  + Are respected and active outsidePREVENT in their professional field and/or home community,
  + Excel as managers are varying geographic levels- internally, regionally, in their country or local community.
* PREVENT believes all leaders must develop and demonstrate cultural competence and values, and advocate for appreciation of diversity, broadly defined.
* PREVENT believes it is important to make clear the requirements, processes and opportunities for advancement for all staff into leadership positions.
* PREVENT leaders are committed to proactively and creatively working to increase personal and organizational attention to leadership development to ensure that all staff have opportunities to grow and to develop as leaders.

# 2.0 Getting Ready

## A. Procedures for Planned (standard) Succession

*The Executive transition* is generally the period that begins with the executive’s decision to depart (or the Board of Director’s decision to terminate) and extends through the hiring and successful completion of a six-month evaluation of the new executive.  The Executive transition will however not be used to exclude nurturing of talent and potential of staff within the organization to take up the role of the executive. In case a CEO of PREVENT leaves the position for another opportunity, the following standard procedures are to be effected. The CEO will have given the required notice period as per his/her employment contract.

Our emphasis is on a holistic executive transition management i.e. the management of the entire departure-recruitment-installation process in a holistic fashion.  To PREVENT, Executive transition is not just about finding an executive who fits the current and future demands of the job (although it does that, too), but also focuses on minimizing the risk and capturing all of the opportunities that a change in leaders offers.  In addition, the executive transition management process at PREVENT helps in achieving the following:

* Helping the organization better understand its history, present situation and future prospects as it relates to the selection of a new leader,
* Identifying and addressing any legacy issues that might hinder the success of the incoming leader,
* Planning for a solid orientation for the new executive and a great launch,
* Ensuring that the governance team (the Board and executive team) has a clear and effective social contract that includes consensus on overall direction and key initial priorities as well as a clear understanding of their respective roles and their contributions toward the achievement of the organization objectives,
* Establishing a performance monitoring and evaluation process,

### *A1. Actions for the Departing Executive*

Once the executive announces their intent to leave, relationships and roles shift immediately. The departing executive can help themselves and the organization best if they:

* + 1. Provide the Board of Directors (Board) with a clear picture of the priorities in terms of pending work to be done during the interim period. Handover notes should also include information on where all important documents are kept, in both hard and soft copies.
    2. Shift priorities to short-term actions that the departing executive and the Board agree will strengthen the organization before their departure.
    3. Encourage the Board chair to appoint a transition committee.
    4. Avoid (in most cases) being actively involved in selecting the successor. The departing executive should discuss their appropriate role with the Board and transition committee.
    5. Encourage the Board to get outside help rather than rely on the departing executive, especially if the departing executive is the founder.
    6. Celebrate relationships and accomplishments, and say goodbye in ways appropriate for the departing executive, and be direct if there are ways the departing executive would or wouldn’t like to celebrate their time at the organization.

### *A2. Board Guidelines for Long Absence*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Phase I: Getting Ready** | **Phase II: Recruiting** | **Phase III: Post-Hire** |
| Conducting an exit interview and deciding who’s in charge of what in the short term     Assessing organization priorities i.e. key issues and availability of resources. Determine the status of the organization’s health.     Hiring interim manager, particularly if not ready to hire or in crisis     Developing profile of new executive attributes, knowledge, skills     Setting a competitive compensation strategy in consultation with human resources     Saying an appropriate good-bye to departing executive     Understanding and dealing with departing executive’s legacy.     Develop a communication plan to keep stakeholders informed. | Agreeing on a recruitment strategy, including options for looking internally or externally.     Developing an organizational overview.     Proactively seeking candidates     Screening and ranking candidates against profile     Coming up with a three step recruitment process and tools i.e. initial phone interview on technical aspects, second in person interview to assess behavior, and a final presentation interview.     Briefing key stakeholders about progress.     Selecting and negotiating with final candidate, provision of letter of offer. Checking references.     Having a back-up plan if first candidate declines     Completing letter of appointment | Preparing a welcoming committee and introducing new executive     Orienting new executive to organization and community     Making agreements between Board and new executive on three- and six-month work plan     Agreeing on executive evaluation process     Executive development planning by new executive with Board support     Agreeing on when to revisit strategic plan and direction of organization. |

This plan should also factor in decisions on the following:

* Determining if the organization can continue to provide its full range of services during the transition or, if not, making recommendations to the Board on a short-term restructuring of services and operations.
* Assuring that the books and records, information systems and physical property of the organization are secure and properly maintained during the transition period.
* Maintaining relationships with the organization’s bankers, attorneys, accountants and other service providers and assuring that they are kept appropriately aware of the transition’s progress.
* In some cases, overseeing a review of the organization's systems, policies and procedures. This could include a review of the availability and accuracy of budget and financial information, personnel policies and records, contracts and contract compliance, and related administrative issues. An audit or review by an independent accounting firm may be called for. These reviews could require using consultants, lawyers, accountants and other organizational systems specialists.

A2.1 **Develop an Organizational Overview**

The transition committee should prepare a brief overview of the organization that can be given to all candidates who are considered viable after the first review of letters of interest and résumés. This overview would provide a brief history, mission/vision statements and a review of the organization’s size, staffing and operations.

Finalists will require, and are entitled to, considerably more information. They should receive a more comprehensive overview that speaks to the organization’s services, goals, aspirations, needs and challenges. Additionally, finalists should be given copies of the annual report, annual financial statement and recent newsletters or other publications.

A2.2 **Review or Develop an Executive Director Profile or job description**

A fundamental tool in assessing candidates for the executive position is the executive director profile. The preparation of this document requires close collaboration of the Board and the transition committee. The executive director profile flows from organizational analyses done to prepare information packets described above. It describes the skills, qualities, talents, experience and education that a new executive will need to lead the organization, and also serves as a job description and basis for future evaluations.

### A2.3 Develop a Compensation and Benefits Package

An executive looks for two things in exchange for providing the services described in the profile: a sense of satisfaction in a job well done and compensation. Satisfaction comes with time in service and, while the organization can point to how that might come about – a good working environment, a meaningful mission, a challenging assignment – it doesn’t serve well as a negotiating tool. The compensation package, then, becomes a fundamental tool in attracting the best candidate.

The compensation package includes:

* Salary, including the base amount, as well as the organization’s policies on the timing and levels of increases or bonuses,
* Health, life and disability insurance, including the benefits provided, deductibles, and coverage for dependents,
* Retirement program to which the employer contributes (the lack of which is among the most often-cited reasons for executives to leaving an organization),
* Vacation and sick-leave policies,
* Time off and funding for continuing education,
* Relocation expenses.

For the Board to determine the level of compensation required to attract the right executive, it should research and be updated on pay levels of executives at organizations similar to PREVENT.

### A2.4 The Welcoming Committee

The process of executive transition is only half done when the new executive signs their contract. Preparing the organization for the arrival of a new executive and welcoming that executive into the organization and the community are responsibilities of the Board. The Board might want to consider setting up a special committee specifically to handle this important transition issue.

The duties of this committee include:

* Preparing staff for the arrival of the new executive through staff meetings and possibly individual meetings with the people reporting directly to the executive,
* Introducing the executive to staff and welcoming him/her into the organization, by possibly hosting a special luncheon or dinner event for that purpose,
* Welcoming the new executive into the community by issuing a press release and personal introductions to community leaders,
* Introducing the executive to the organization’s partners, service providers and clients,
* Reviewing the organization’s programs, policies and procedures with the new executive,
* Advising the executive of specifics challenges or problems facing the organization,
* Generally orienting the executive to the organization and its culture.

## B. Emergency Leadership Succession

### *B1. Board Procedures for Emergency Leadership Succession*

The Board of Directors authorizes the Board Chair to implement the terms of this emergency succession plan in the event of a planned or unplanned temporary or short-term absence. For a temporary change in executive leadership (i.e., illness or leave of absence) refer to the organization’s Personnel Guidebook.  In the event the chief executive officer (CEO) of the PREVENT is no longer able to serve in this position (i.e., leaves the position permanently), the executive committee of the Board shall do the following:

1. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to inform the Board of a planned temporary or short-term absence, and to plan accordingly.
2. It is the responsibility of the Strategic Initiatives Director to immediately inform the Board Chair of an unplanned temporary or short-term absence.
3. As soon as feasible, following notification of an unplanned temporary or short-term absence, the Board President shall convene an Executive Committee meeting to affirm the procedures prescribed in this plan, or to modify them if needed.

### *B2. Priority Functions of the Executive Director at PREVENT*

The Executive Director position description is attached to this plan. Among the duties listed in the position description, the following are considered to be the key functions of the Executive Director and have a corresponding temporary staffing strategy as indicated below.

### *B3. Key Executive Director Functions & Respective temporary Staffing Strategy*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Key Executive Director Functions** | **Temporary Staffing Strategy** |
| Professional Leadership and Vision | Board Chair with selected acting staff |
| Board Administration, Consultation and Support | Board Chair with selected acting staff |
| Management of organization and staff | [insert as appropriate] |
| Fiscal responsibility including sourcing for new business i.e. fundraising | [insert as appropriate] |
| Financial Management Treasurer with Executive Assistant and Accountant | Board Chair with selected acting staff & finance manager |
| Initiate positive external relations i.e. publicity and publications | [insert as appropriate] |

The positions assigned in the Temporary Staffing Strategy are based on PREVENT's organization structure as of *July 2012*. In the event this plan is implemented and assigned positions are vacant or no longer available, the Board Chair shall select another senior staff to support each of the key executive director functions.

# Step-By-Step Guide To Recruitment Process – For Executive Transition-Search Committee Members

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Process** | **Details** | | | **Responsible Person** | **Timing** | |
| 1.  Pre-Recruitment Decisions and Planning | > Confirm that proposed recruitment is within agreed work plan.  > Obtain Board Chair’s authorization to recruit using the staff requisition template.  > Review and update Job Profile  > Prepare Recruitment Plan and share Board Chair and HR.  > Compose the interview panel | | | Executive Search Committee  (ESC) | Two weeks | |
| 2. Advertising | > Send final job description to HR for placement, circulation, and executive searching  > HR request administrative officer to circulate the advertisement and approve final advert copy before publication in the newspaper.  > Send other job advertisements through internal and external advertising, such as e-mail etc using approved format. Ensure that copies are sent to the mandatory government offices such as Ministry of Labor, if applicable  > Follow up local adverts with committee and monitor closing dates of advertisements.  > Develop interview questions and seek HR support in clarity etc. HR to keep final copy of interview questions and checklist until interviews. | | | Executive Search Committee  (ESC) | One week- two months | |
| 3. Applications | >Supporting office receives and forwards all applications to executive search committee. | | | Executive Search Committee  (ESC) | Ongoing | |
| 4. Short Listing | > Carry out an initial short listing using approved formats.  Consider each application against initial criteria developed and based on basic application requirements in the job advert. Candidates who meet these criteria will then be invited for the three-part interview process i.e. 1. phone interview 2. in person behavioral and 3. in person presentation interviews. Note that some skills or competencies cannot be assessed from the applications but through oral and written tests during the interview e.g. Communication, Computer Skills, and Personal Qualities etc.  > ESC sends all information, including summary results and applications, to HR for review.  > HR makes recommendations for proceeding with in person interviews.  > Short listed candidates who meet the short-listing criteria are invited to the interview by ESC. If there is only one candidate suitable for short listing, in discussion with HR, it is acceptable to proceed to interview. However, it is often advisable to re-advertise in such a case, and compile another short list. Similar response should be followed in the case of a failed recruitment, where there are no suitable candidates for short listing. Prepare interview time schedule and forward to HR. | | | Executive Search Committee  (ESC) |  | |
| 5. Invite to Interview | | > Contact short listed candidates by telephone as soon as possible to invite them to the 2nd interviews. Write a formal interview invitation letter /email to their addresses, which include the start date, time and venue for the interview in the letter.  > Give reasonable notice to candidates, usually one week and give formal invitation to all panelists.  > Send an e-mail reminder to IT department to avail a computer for third phase or presentation interview.  > Prepare schedule of refund for travel i.e. costs and meal allowance for panelists. Budget Holder to sign off.  > Prepare Interview Assessment Sheets including questions and suggested answers, as well as written tests. ESC indicates composition of Interviewing Panel, usually no more than three including HR.  > Ensure that equipment are made available and tested before the day of the interview. | Executive Search Committee  (ESC) | |  |
| 6. Hold Presentation Interviews | | > The interview and tests allow the interviewing panel to assess the candidates’ skills and provide comparable data from which to make a final selection.  > Panel members agree on how questions should be asked but usually should take turns. The Board Chair or HR manager is the chair for the recruiting panel but chair role can oscillate between the two considering the repetition of the process for each candidate. Each panelist should complete an assessment sheet for each candidate, which should be signed by both the Board Chair and the panel member. It will serve as the official record of the interview.  > Panel members should not intimidate candidates and judgments should be based on factual evidence. After each interview panelist can take a 10 minute break to finalize the assessment sheets. | Executive Search Committee  (ESC) | | One day |
| 7. Complete Interview and Check Test Results | | > No final decision should be made until the presentation tests results are available, so that there is a complete record of each candidate’s performance. On the basis of the results, the panel members determine which candidates meet all or a sufficient number of selection criteria  > Select the preferred candidate as well as reserves, in order of preference.  > Discuss next steps with HR, if there is no appointable candidate. | Executive Search Committee  (ESC) | | One-two weeks, if tests could not be assessed on the same day of interview. |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 8. Offer of Appointment/  Rejections | > Forward results and recommendations to ESC and Board Chair, along with all interview summary sheets for approval to proceed with appointment.  > Prepare Offer Letter and submit to Board Chair, with accompanying recruitment documents such as job profile, job advert, application form/CV, interview assessment and test sheets, approved staff requisition form and checklist of required recruitment documents  > Send out rejection letters to unsuccessful candidates  > Send signed offer letter to candidate and follow up to ensure that candidate returns it promptly. | Executive Search Committee  (ESC) | Process could take up to three days |
| 9. Medicals and Follow up | Once successful candidate has accepted the offer, the candidate is requested to present a complete medical report from a government hospital. | HR/Government doctor | One day |
| 10. Issue of Contracts | > Prepare two copies of contracts for the Board Chair’s signature or for his designated appointee’s endorsement.  > Issue the contracts to the candidate who should sign and return two copies to HR office, retaining one copy. The contract would indicate the start date agreed with the candidate.  >Forward one copy to Finance and retain one copy in HR file. | Executive Search Committee  (ESC) | This stage varies but could take up to two weeks and at times, beyond, depending how quickly the medical results and references are received. |
| 12. Orientation Program | > Prepare an orientation schedule before candidate reports.  > Circulate draft schedule to heads of various departments for approval.  > Prepare the welcome /orientation pack for the new employee.  >Follow-through on employee orientation program and compliance. | Welcoming Committee with support from HR |  |

1. Build extra time into your plan to identify and attract a diverse pool of candidates.
2. Consider whether outside assistance from a consultant or facilitator friend of the organization is needed to get the complete picture of the organization and its needs.
3. Retain outside help, unless you have an experienced volunteer with immediate time and expertise to devote to the transition.
4. As soon as possible, notify staff, Board, and other stakeholders know about the transition. Tell them in writing and in person where possible. Let them know when the executive is leaving and who will head the search committee. Invite input into the attributes of the next executive, priorities of the organization, and suggestions for possible candidates.
5. Review your compensation package and be open about the final salary until you’ve tested the market for candidates.
6. Say an appropriate goodbye to your departing executive and celebrate his or her contribution to the organization.
7. Communicate regularly with the departing executive, board members, and other key stakeholders.

# 4.0 Succession Plan in the event of a Permanent Unplanned Absence

**a. Definition**

A permanent absence is one in which it is firmly determined that the Executive Director will not be returning to the position.

**b. Procedures**

Procedures and conditions to be followed shall be the same as for a temporary short-term absence with the following additions:

* Board shall consider the need to hire an Interim Executive Director from outside the organization instead of appointing an Acting Executive Director. This decision shall be guided, in part, by internal candidates for the Executive Director position, the expected time frame for hiring a permanent executive, and the management needs of the organization at the time of the transition.
* Board shall appoint a Transition Committee to implement the organization's Executive Succession Policy to transition to a new permanent executive director. A copy of this policy is attached.

## 4.1 Interim Period and Recruitment

Within 5 business days appoint an interim CEO according to the following line of succession:

Chief Operating Officer (COO) of PREVENT

Senior Vice President of the parent affiliate of the PREVENT

External Consultant (with experience as an interim executive director)

Within 15 business days appoint an executive transition committee, in the event that a permanent change in leadership is required. This committee shall be comprised of at least one member of the executive committee and two members of the board of directors.  It shall be the responsibility of this committee to implement the following preliminary transition plan:

* Communicate with key stakeholders regarding actions taken by the board in naming an interim successor, appointing a transition committee, and implementing the succession policy.  The organization shall maintain a current list of key stakeholders who must be contacted, such as lenders and investors of PREVENT, foundations, government agencies, etc.
* Consider the need for consulting assistance (i.e., transition management or executive search consultant) based on the circumstances of the transition.
* Review the organization’s business plan and conduct a brief assessment of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) to identify priority issues that may need to be addressed during the transition process and to identify attributes and characteristics that are important to consider in the selection of the next permanent leader.
* Establish a time frame and plan for the recruitment and selection process.

## Authority and Restrictions of the Acting Executive Director

The Acting Executive Director shall have authority for daily decision making and independent action as the regular Executive Director.

Decisions that will be made in consultation with the Board Chair and/or Executive Committee include staff hiring and terminations, financial issues, new business, and taking public policy positions on behalf of the organization.

## 4.3 Compensation

Director-level staff appointed as Acting Executive Director may receive an end of year bonus or additional benefit. This shall be determined by the Executive Committee based on the duration of the assignment and available resources.

If staff serves as Acting Executive Director for 3 months or more, the Executive Committee may consider a salary adjustment.

A current or former board member appointed as Acting Director may enter into an independent contractor agreement, depending on the circumstances of their availability. The Executive Director on leave is eligible for all applicable benefits.

## 4.4 Board Oversight and Support to the Acting Executive Director

The Acting Executive Director reports to the Board Chair. In the event that the Board Chair becomes the Acting Executive Director, the Vice Chair shall be appointed Board Chair. The Executive Committee should be aware of the special support needs of the Acting Executive Director in this temporary role. The Executive Committee shall convene monthly when an Acting Executive Director is appointed.

## 4.5 Communications Plan

Within 48 hours after an Acting Executive Director is appointed, the Board Chair and the Acting Executive Director shall meet to develop a communications plan to develop content of information that will be shared and with whom.

* The following chart identifies key supporters and a primary contact to facilitate communication.
* As soon as possible, the Board Chair and Acting Executive Director shall implement the communications plan to announce the organization’s temporary leadership structure to staff, the Board, and key stakeholders.
* Updated contact information shall be maintained in the organization’s database with the following designations:
* Key Contact List
* Extended Key Contact List
* Past Board Officers/Members List
* Foundation CEOs and Members
* Other Organization Contacts
* Within 5 business days, the Board shall distribute a press release with general information appropriate to the situation.

## 4.6 Key Supporters Communication Plan

## The following communication plan is to be adhered to in relation to communication to different stakeholders.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Key Support** | **Communication Responsibility** |
| Civic and Nonprofit Leaders Strategic Initiatives & Government Leaders | Director with designated board members |
| Associations/Networks of Nonprofit Orgs |  |
| Foundation Program Officers | Member Services Director with designated (holding grants and contracts) Board Members |
| Major Donors | Designated Board Members responsible for phone call to top 10 major donors, followed by a letter to all donors |
| Members | Designated Board Members with staff create phone tree |
| Non-Members Affinity Groups | Designated staff support |
| National Colleagues Strategic Initiatives | Director |
| Personal Colleagues Strategic Initiatives | Director with designated Board members |
| Operating Support (based on need) | External auditor and finance manager  Legal Counsel  Insurance Agent |

## 4.7 Transition Team

The transition team should consist of members of the advisory board, some stakeholders, and a transition consultant. Having a HR professional on the committee or consulting closely is also advised in order to define the process and in protecting the organization from legal issues. In some circumstances, the void created by the departing executive will have to be filled on an interim basis. During this period, relationships and partnerships must continue to be nurtured and corporate operations must continue. Board members may have to temporarily assume many of these responsibilities. If those board officers who will most likely have the heaviest burden – the chair, vice-chair and treasurer, for example – are unwilling or unable to take on the assignment, the Board, lead by its willing members, will have to reorganize itself accordingly.

The basic assignment of the transition committee is to present the board with a small number of eligible candidates from which it can make a final selection. There are number of steps for which this committee will have primary responsibility over including:

* + Developing a transition plan to guide the process
  + Providing the board with a transition timetable, including deadlines for administrative tasks and presenting candidates
  + Developing a budget for the entire transition process
  + Overseeing the preparation of an informational packet to be provided to all candidates and an organizational overview to be provided to finalist candidates
  + Overseeing the preparation of an executive profile against which the board can assess candidates
  + Collaborating with the board in the development of a compensation package
  + Screening applications
  + Arranging for interviews and reference checks
  + Interviewing and assessing candidates
  + Making recommendations to the board on finalists

The transition committee has a big assignment, and its members should be willing and able to devote the necessary time to it. Recruiting the right executive takes time – typically from 6 to 18 months. The committee will be very busy at the beginning, as applications arrive, and as reference checks and interviews are scheduled.

## 4.8 Five Developmental Tasks for the Interim Period

This “interim time” is often essential for the organization to come to terms with its history and the loss of the departing executive and to address any latent issues. The crucial task of the interim director is to ensure that a solid platform is in place for the new executive.

1.     **Coming to terms with history**. One of the fundamental tasks of the interim director is to help the Board get an accurate view of the organization—its past, its strengths, its weaknesses, its shortcomings, and its accomplishments.  In transitions involving an organization in crisis, especially when a termination is involved, there is often a tendency to magnify the shortcomings of the former leader while ignoring some of the underlying organizational issues that contributed to precipitating the crisis—issues which may have predated the “failed” executive’s hiring and probably still persist after he/she has left.

2.     **Exploring identity and direction**. An executive transition is a unique moment to shape the future of the organization, unconstrained by the limitations of the executive’s leadership capacity and capabilities.  Faced with replacing their executive, Boards will have the departing executive’s job description. This however should not be the sole basis for a forward-looking leadership search.

3.     **Making leadership/operational changes**. Quite often, a change in executives will reveal other needed changes—in leadership, staffing, systems or structure. One of the tensions that the interim director faces is making or encouraging necessary changes while minimizing the disruption to the organization.  The true test of any change is whether it will advance the organization without undue disruption.

4.     **Committing to new leadership and a new direction**. The final step of the interim process is making a commitment to the new executive and the new direction. At this point, PREVENT will have a healthy perspective on its history, have worked during the interim period to build a solid platform for the new executive, and have a clear sense of the organization direction and priorities that it is laying out before the new executive.  In short, it should be prepared to launch and support its new staff leader.

## 4.9 Actions for Boards & Search Committees

 The following are some steps to consider:

1. In the first week after the departure, take stock of the key issues facing the organization and the leadership and resources available to manage the transition.
2. Develop a plan that pays attention to all three phases of transition—preparing, recruiting, and post-hiring.
3. Consider whether outside assistance from a consultant or facilitator friend of the organization is needed to get the full picture of the organization and its needs.
4. As soon as possible, let staff, board, and other stakeholders know about the transition. Tell them in writing and in person where possible. Let them know when the executive is leaving and who will head the search committee. Invite input into the attributes of the next executive, priorities of the organization, and possible candidates.
5. Organize for an appropriate goodbye to your departing executive and celebrate his or her contribution to the organization.
6. Maintain communication with the departing executive, board members, and other key stakeholders.

## 4.10 Hiring an Interim Executive Director

If an Interim Executive Director is hired, the Board Chair and Executive Committee shall negotiate an independent contractor agreement with a defined scope of work. The scope of the agreement with an Interim Executive Director shall be determined based on an assessment of the organization's needs at the time of the leadership transition.

## 4.11 Responsibilities of the Interim Executive Director

An Interim Executive Director shall have full authority for day-to-day decision making and independent action as the regular Executive Director. Decisions that shall be made in consultation with the Board Chair and/or Executive Committee include staff hiring and terminations, financial issues, taking on a new project, and taking policy positions on behalf of the organization.

## 4.12 Board Oversight and Support to the Interim Executive Director

The Interim Executive Director reports to the Board Chair. The Executive Committee shall be alert to the special support needs of the Interim Executive Director in this temporary role. The Executive Committee shall convene monthly when an Interim Executive Director is hired. The Board Chair and Executive Committee are responsible for gathering input from staff and reviewing the performance of the Interim Executive Director according to the organization's Performance Review Policy. An initial review shall be completed between 30 and 45 days, and after 90 days.

## 4.13 Approvals and Maintenance of Record

**a. Emergency Succession Plan Approval**

Emergency succession plan shall be approved initially by the Board of Directors. Thereafter, annually, the Executive Committee shall review the plan and recommend amendments to the full Board as needed.

**b. Signatories**

**T**he Board Chair, the Executive Director, and the appointees designated in the Emergency Succession Plan shall sign the plan.The Board Chair, Treasurer and at least one Director-level staff, in addition to the Executive Director, shall have signature authorization for checks and contracts for the organization at all times.

**c. Maintenance or record**

Copies of this plan shall be maintained by all members of the Board, Director-level staff and the organization's auditor in accordance with document retention requirements.

**d. Financial Considerations**

It shall be the ultimate responsibility of the Executive Committee to review the organization's finances during an unplanned absence of the Executive Director. PREVENT maintains an operating reserve that the Board Chair is authorized to access with Executive Committee approval.

# 5.0 Succession Plan in the Event of a Temporary Absence

**a. Definitions**

* A temporary absence is one in which it is expected that the Executive Director will return once the events precipitating the absence are resolved. It can be planned or unplanned, but should be short term.
* An unplanned absence is one that arises unexpectedly. In contrast to a planned leave (such as vacation or a sabbatical) it could be due to emergencies, such as sickness etc.
* A absence is between two days and 90 days is considered temporary.

**b. Temporary Staffing Strategy**

In the event of a temporary short-term absence, the Executive Committee i.e. Board Chair, Treasurer and Vice Secretary shall determine if the Temporary Staffing Strategy is sufficient for this period of time. Otherwise the actions detailed below will apply.

**c. Appointing an Acting Executive Director**

Based on the anticipated duration of the absence, the anticipated return date, and accessibility of the Executive Director during absence, the Executive Committee may appoint *a*n Acting Executive Director, as well as continue to implement the Temporary Staffing Strategy.

**d. Standing Appointees to the Position of Acting Executive Director**

* + The first position in line to be Acting Executive Director is the most qualified Director-level staff available.
  + The second position in line, in the event that there is no specific fully available or experience staf, is the Executive Committee’s consideration of the option to split executive duties among designated appointees or rotating the function on a weekly basis and with limited authority to incur expenditure or make radical decisions among the available senior staff.
  + The third position in line is the appointment of the Board Chair to temporarily act. This is contingent on the Board Chair’s acceptance of the position. The Board Chair must also temporarily relinquish his /her Board Chair position in order to undertake this role.

# 6.0 Succession Plan in the Event of a Long term Unplanned Absence

# a. Definition

A long-term absence is defined as 90 days or longer.

**b. Procedures**

Procedures and conditions to be followed shall be the same as for a temporary short-term absence with the following additions:

* The Executive Committee shall give immediate consideration, in consultation with the Acting Executive Director, to temporarily filling the management position left vacant by the Acting Executive Director, or reassigning priority responsibilities where help is needed to other staff. This is in recognition that, for a term of 90 days or more, it may not be reasonable to expect the Acting Director to carry the duties of both positions.
* The Board Chair and Executive Committee are responsible for gathering input from staff and reviewing the performance of the Acting Executive Director according to the organization’s Performance Review Policy. A review shall be completed between 30 and 45 days.

# 7.0 Information for Interim Appointees

The biggest challenge for interim appointees in the first months is making relationship building a priority while addressing critical organizational issues that need attention. This is the time to get to know the organization and build the relationships needed to succeed. Here are some suggestions for interim appointees:

* Before starting the job, review copies of the bylaws, current financial statements, board roster and minutes, staff roster and resumes, previous two years’ of financial audits, and a summary of contractual obligations and funding commitments.
* Clarify the Board’s expectations of results.
* Make meetings with staff, the Board, and key stakeholders a priority. Ask for their guidance on people to meet and their assistance in facilitating introductions.
* Ask the Board for a written work plan of priorities for the first three months. Initiate a process of written work plans for the Board to use in evaluating performance.
* Insist on a three-month informal check-in and a six-month review of performance. Ask for feedback on an ongoing basis.
* Build an effective Executive-Board relationship.
* Work to create a safe place to learn. Admit what isn’t known, and ask for support for during orientation and professional development needs.

# 8.0 The Emergency Succession Plan

An emergency succession plan "ensures the continuous coverage of executive duties critical to the ongoing operations of an organization and its services to its clients" by outlining “policies and procedures for the temporary appointment of an acting executive director." This plan is affected in instances where the CEO/Executive Director becomes incapacitated or dies.

There are several key components to this emergency succession plan.

The plan identifies the **priority functions** of the executive director of that organization.  These functions include general functions that are likely to be true for any executive acting as the organization’s principal leader, representative and spokesperson, and specific functions, which are unique to the particular organization.

Second, the plan identifies **what will happen** in the event of a short- or long-term absence of the director.  This includes notification of the Board or executive committee of the Board, the process that the Board or Executive Committee of the Board begins once they are notified, the compensation and authority of an acting executive, and provisions for hiring assistance for longer term absences or instituting a transition and search committee in the event of a permanent absence.

Third, the plan identifies several **staff members** (up to 3) who can be **appointed** as acting executive director by the Executive Committee of the Board.  For example, a deputy director may be the first choice, the program director the second choice and the finance director the third choice of the Executive Committee, or the Executive Committee may choose to split functions among these staff.

Fourth, the plan includes provisions for **cross training** those staff people who may be appointed to acting executive director in the priority functions of the executive.  Planning for cross training and implementing the training should begin as soon as the plan is adopted by the Board.  The plan may also identify those responsible for planning and implementing cross training.

Fifth, the succession plan highlights the importance of **communication** with external supporters in the event that this plan is activated.  Specifically, it identifies categories of supporters such as government contract officers, foundation program officers, civic leaders and major donors who should be personally notified by the Board and acting executive as soon as possible.

# 9.0 Post Hire

## 9.1 Welcome and Introduce the New Executive

Properly integrating the new executive into the organization is important. The welcoming committee is tasked to do so and begin this by laying the ground work for this process. By this point in the transition process, the board and the new executive will know each other fairly well. Those most impacted by the new executive – the staff – know little, if anything, about him or her. An executive transition invariably results in anxiety among the staff, and that anxiety is a factor in the transition that must be addressed. While the style, personality and behavior of the new executive will ultimately determine his or her relationship with staff, the board is in a position to positively influence how that relationship begins.

**Some points to consider:**

* While the departing executive, especially an effective one, deserves thanks and a gracious send-off, the responsibility of the board is to the organization’s future, specifically to the new executive. Overdoing the accolades given to the departed can create an unrealistic challenge for the new executive.
* The welcoming committee and the board chair should meet with staff before the arrival of the new executive and discuss with them the hiring process and share their support and enthusiasm for the new executive, setting the stage for a positive reception.
* The board must be aware of the human issues that the staff is dealing with as it goes through this change, and be especially sensitive to individuals or cliques that are prepared to manifest their discomfort by disruptive behavior.
* A representative of the board, ideally the chair, should be on hand to welcome the new executive upon his or her first-day arrival, help orient the executive to the office and make introductions to staff. This courtesy will help reduce the inherent awkwardness of the occasion and will demonstrate the board’s commitment to the new executive.
* If an interim director was engaged it may be helpful to arrange for that individual to remain on staff for a week or two to assist the new executive settle in and become acquainted with procedures and issues. Beyond welcoming the new executive to the office, the board must assure that he or she is properly introduced to the organization’s service providers – attorneys, accountants, bankers, consultants, etc. – and assist in the transfer of their allegiance from the departing or interim executive to the new one. Board involvement in these introductions will help legitimize the authority of the new executive and ease the transition.

Such introductions are also required with the leaders of partnering and sponsoring organizations, principal funders, appropriate government officials, community leaders and others with whom the organization works closely. Finally, the committee should welcome the new executive into the community. A press release should be issued that will serve both to introduce the new executive and to remind the community of the nonprofit’s work.

## 9.2 Develop Work Plans

A well-functioning organization will have a well-developed and ongoing planning process in place. As a result of the work done early in the executive transition process, described in Phase I, these plans may have been elaborated on and further refined. Whatever their status, the Board will now need to figure the new executive into them. One option for doing this is to present the new executive with a set of the plans and instructions to execute them. A more thoughtful approach might be to use the transition as an opportunity to revisit the plan and enlist the new Executive Director in the process. This will have the dual benefit of providing the executive with an enhanced sense of ownership in the plan, and in providing the Executive Director and the Board with an early opportunity to see how each other thinks and works. Possible approaches include:

* Developing a 90-day work plan, in which the Board and Executive Director agree on the priorities for the first three months, including such things as making the introductions, assessing current operations and becoming familiar with work and communication styles. If the organization has written planning documents, this would provide time for the new Executive Director to assess them and make recommendations on their improvement based on his or her growing understanding of the organization and its capabilities.
* If the organization has short- and long-term plans in place, the new Executive Director should be asked to critically review them and be open to new insights he or she might bring as to how they can be improved.
* If such plans are not in place, an executive transition provides an excellent opportunity for that process to begin, with the new Executive Director and Board together providing leadership in their development. The results of these efforts will be to continue, or begin, the vital process of formal organizational planning. Making such planning a part of the Board-Executive relationship from the beginning will help assure its place in the organization’s culture.

## 9.3 Establish an Evaluation Process

The complement to the work that the Board and new Executive Director do in planning the organization’s future is assessing the execution of those plans. Holding the Executive Director accountable for performance is a fundamental responsibility of the Board. While evaluation is a continuous process, a plan should be made for specific evaluation points. A check-in evaluation should be held after 90 days on the job. By this time the Board, Executive Director and staff will have adapted to the new situation and work should have begun on substantive issues. Many organizations consider the first 90 days of any staff member’s employment as probationary. The 90-day evaluation will allow the Board an opportunity to revisit the relationship that was established at the time of hiring. The Executive Director, having the benefit of being new to the organization and seeing it from that perspective, has a forum for advising the Board of issues he/she feels need to be addressed.

A second, more formal evaluation should be conducted by the Board Chair and Executive Committee after six months. At this time the Board can advise the Executive Director of any early concerns it has in performance, communication or style.

Finally, a 12-month evaluation should be held in which all aspects of performance, measured against previously agreed-upon goals, objectives and expectations are reviewed, with follow-up evaluations every year thereafter.

Evaluations are typically the responsibility of the Executive Committee, with the Board Chair taking the lead.

# 10.0 Strategic Leadership Planning

## 10.1 Mentor Scheme for General Staff?

The mentor scheme provides 'on-the-job' opportunities for talented PREVENT staff to advance to leadership positions in the organization. Initially, a mentor and mentee design and monitor a professional support plan for the mentee. The focus of the scheme is on the current work needs of the mentee but areas the mentee needs to work on the assume leadership responsibility in the shortest time possible. Therefore, the issues discussed and tasks undertaken will be unique and confidential to each pair.

Benefits for the mentee

* Provides encouragement and assistance in career planning
* Increases confidence through the demonstration of progress
* Increases expertise
* Increases personal and professional networks
* Helps gain greater insights into the PREVENT

Benefits for the mentor

* Enables the mentor to learn and demonstrate management and leadership skills
* Increases personal and professional networks
* Provides a chance to assist actively in the personal and professional skills development of a colleague

### *How does the mentor scheme work?*

* The mentor and mentee together discuss and analyze the work context of the mentee and develop objectives, specific plans and tasks for action. They will try to match these needs and set these objectives, corresponding to the mentor's expertise, understanding and experience. Objectives, plans and tasks will be directly related to the work context of the mentee and to the skills which he/she is interested in developing. It will also include a plan for monitoring progress. This will be discussed and acted upon at ongoing meetings, until it is mutually agreed that the mentoring relationship has achieved its objectives.

**Who can be mentored?**

The mentoring relationship should be specific and task-focused (e.g.: planning a career path, handling conflicting job demands, improving team skills etc). Very often the initial need expressed by the mentee is quite general and unfocused. It is important to spend adequate time discussing the issues together, to clarify the work situation and the real needs. The mentee's needs are the guiding principle but the mentor is to offer advice in the best interest of the mentee. A mentee can be any staff in positions within PREVENT who have been with the organization for at least three months and is expected to be with the the organization for at least two years.

**What is the time commitment for the mentoring relationship?**

The mentoring relationship can last between 3 months and 12 months and there should be no expectation that it will continue longer than this time. The number of meetings will depend upon the needs of the mentee and the availability of the mentor. The important thing to remember is that the amount of time devoted to mentoring is negotiated by both the mentor and mentee, and can be re-negotiated by them, or even terminated, if considered appropriate, however human resources must be informed of all meetings. Records of each meeting should be kept by HR at the end the mentor relationship along with recommendations.

It is important that both mentor and mentee keep the other informed of any planned periods of absence from PREVENT, so that this can be considered in planning tasks and meetings.

**Timing of meetings**

This is based on the availability of the mentor and the mentee, and the nature and timelines associated with particular tasks. Generally an hour would be sufficient. The feedback sessions work best if they occur reasonably soon after a task is completed, as impressions are still fresh. A record of meeting is kept by the mentee in order to aid memory, but also to provide the mentor and the mentee with a record of progress and achievement, and to assist them to monitor the process.

**What are the stages of the mentoring process?**

Stage one

Discuss the needs of the mentee

Discuss their work context

Clarify objectives, with priorities for achieving them

Negotiate time commitment

Agree on meeting times

Stage two

Break down objectives to specifics

Design task/s for mentee to complete by future meetings

Work out focus for feedback - criteria for success and desired outcomes

Stage three

Discuss task outcomes, with feedback based on expertise and experience of the mentor

Discuss any additional outcomes

Develop a new task

Decide on next meeting date.

### Evaluation

### At the end of the mentoring period, both mentors and mentees are asked to complete an evaluation form and to attend a one hour evaluation session. It is useful if the pairs can discuss the outcomes and degree of success of the mentoring relationship together, prior to the evaluation exercise.

## [Skip to content](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/mentoring/#skip-content#skip-content)

Designating a mentor is the responsibility of the human resources department. Some thought needs to be given to 'matching' mentors to staff members appropriately. All new members of staff should be informed on appointment that they can expect to have a leadership mentor. An existing member of staff making a transition between posts or relatively senior level, for example Program Officer to Junior Project Manager, should also be given a mentor. Someone passing through a number of different roles within PREVENT might have a mentor on more than one occasion. This is because people at different stages of their career may require different supporting information and advice, especially when they are taking on new and different types of appointment.

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## 10.2 Cross - Training Plan

Human Resources and the Executive Director shall develop a training plan or orientation session with staff members in each Director-level position and senior management team for each of the key functions of the Executive Director listed in Section 3.

## 10.3 The Executive Development Program

PREVENT’s Executive Development Program is to improve leadership skills for both current and future leaders at PREVENT.  Employees who are eligible to apply for the program are in Grade level 6, 7 and 8, provided they have already been at PREVENT for at least one year and are planning to be here for at least three more years or indefinitely.  The program will include course work, mentoring, coaching, and special assignments over a period of one year and follow-on activities thereafter.  The program will be operated by PREVENT with training and specialized help from outside organizations.  PREVENT expects to select four people for the program this year, and for the next two years beyond that.  Numbers may vary depending on funding and other circumstances.

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|  | **The Succession Time Plan** |
| **1** | **Choosing Potential Successors**  This is an intensive effort that calls for an examination of all employees who potentially have the skill set and ability to lead PREVENT. The departing Executive Director may want to seek the advice of the Board, a search committee and a Human Resource manager to help select potential successors. These two approaches can help take some of the emotion out of this decision and can add objectivity to the process. One year before the transition period begins is a good time to commence the process, so there is time for the departing Executive Director to oversee the successor as he /she learn the functions of the position. |
| **2** | **Develop a formal coaching and mentoring plan for a potential successor**  To develop a successful training program for your successor, identify the critical functions of PREVENT, and have a successor perform tasks in each of these areas. Immerse the successor in By creating a culture that encourages the successor to take charge within broad guidelines, a space can be established for your successor's style to fit the broader organizational goals. |
| **3** | **Establish a Timetable**  Set up a training timetable and a timetable to successively shift control of the organization. If succession is to be successful, the departing Executor Director, the successor and management team need to know who is in charge of what and when. A timetable also helps motivate the successor to move through his or her training program quickly and successfully, with a clear understanding of upcoming roles and responsibilities as the departing Executive Director moves away from daily functions. |
| **4** | **Prepare yourself to move on** It's also important to outline a plan for the departing Executive Director from the organization. Share highlights of transition, particularly key dates that are crucial to the Board and other stakeholders of the organization. As the successor takes on more responsibilities, the departing Executive Director should spend more time planning how to continue with gradual handover. |

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| **Top 10 PREVENT Leadership Competencies**  *[not listed in order of priority]* | |
| **Communication Skills**   * *Creates & expresses ideas & thoughts to carry out job roles & responsibilities, both written and verbally* * *Develops methodology for conveying messages & information effectively.* | **Business Marketing &**  **Representational Skills**   * *Demonstrates resourcefulness in identifying, attracting & managing new business/funding opportunities for PREVENT.* * *Encourages and models high level of professional & ethical behavior in the development & maintenance of work* |
| **Ethical Behavior & Accountability**   * *Exhibits high level of integrity, ethics, interpersonal skills and good judgment to meet commitments & expectations.* * *Exhibits planning & organizational skills that allow one to meet business objectives & deadlines in a timely manner.* | **Collaboration and Teamwork Skills**   * *Works cooperatively & effectively with supervisors, colleagues, other staff and stakeholders; accepts & offers feedback; exercises & reinforces mutual responsibility, courtesy, dependability & respect in teams.* |
| **Subject Matter Knowledge**   * *Demonstrates core knowledge needed to met job requirements & understands business/project goals & objectives. Keeps abreast of trends in their respective fields and contributes to developing creative recommendations & solutions.* | **Supervisory & Operational Skills**   * *Demonstrates knowledge of financial & accounting procedures, principles & compliance standards to promote fiscal wellness of the corporation or project.* * *Demonstrates and encourages professionalism, ethical behavior & results-oriented performance among staff & colleagues* |
| **Vision & Innovation**  ***(Resourcefulness & Boundary Expansion)***   * *Builds & leverages relationships and/or resources inside & outside PREVENT to enhance productivity & contribute to business development.* * *Understands the politics of the business & is able to utilize a variety of appropriate strategies to meet or exceed business goals & objectives.* | **Analytical Thinking, Problem-solving &**  **Strategy Development Skills**   * *Demonstrates critical thinking & analysis of issues; uses a variety of methodologies to explore solutions to concerns or problems; develops effective strategies to prevent, neutralize or overcome problems* |
| **Cultural Competence**   * *Demonstrates respect for a variety of people & their diverse backgrounds.* * *Learns the basic norms of different cultures, expands language ability beyond first language, approaches people from a position of equality, willing to learn & make mistakes in the process, able to admit mistakes and self-correct or with feedback.* | **Emotional Intelligence**  *Demonstrates personal & interpersonal competence through:*   * *Self Awareness: knowing one’s internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions* * *Self-Regulation: managing one’s internal states, impulses, and resources* * *Self-Motivation: emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals* * *Social Awarenes****s:*** *awareness of others’ feelings, needs, and concerns* * *Social Skills: adeptness a developing networks of relationships & inducing desirable responses in others* |