Ujima! Leveraging the Chief Executive-Board Chair Partnership

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Welcome and Introductions

Since 1998, La Piana Consulting has helped thousands of nonprofits and foundations leverage organizational strategy, structure, and culture to realize their goals.
Session Overview

Objectives:

• Consider the CEO-Board Chair partnership through the lens of Ujima and explore inherent tensions
• Identify and communicate Chair-CEO needs
• Promote Relational Leadership framework as way to cultivate the CEO-Board Chair partnership, and
• Identify barriers to a healthy working relationship and discuss structural recommendations for optimizing performance rooted in shared responsibility
Ujima (oo-JEE-mah)

Collective work and responsibility

“To build and maintain our community together and to make our brother's and sister's problems, our problems and to solve them together.”
Relational Leadership Framework

- Purposeful
- Inclusiveness
- Ethics
- Empowering
- Process
The Needs of Board Chair & CEO

Exercise:

1. Divide into two groups: CEOs and Board Chairs
2. What do I need from my CEO/Chair in order to succeed in my role? (20 minutes)
3. Return to full group and report out (20 minutes)
4. Homework: spend a few minutes later today in dyads discussing what you learned
Building a CEO-Chair Partnership

- Clarify and honor your respective roles
- Communicate early and often
- Show a unified front
- Develop the board
- Plan for transitions in leadership
- Consider the benefits of coaching
Case Study: SAFE

**Issue:** Lack of communication and trust led to finger pointing at violence prevention program

**Outcome:** Result was lying and misinformation between board and staff, and eventual ousting of CEO

**Causes:**
- Lack of strategy
- Poor communication
- Poor board/staff relationships
# Board-Staff Partnership

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<tr>
<th>Board</th>
<th>CEO/Staff</th>
<th>In Partnership</th>
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| - Establishes mission and direction, ensures the necessary resources, and develops guiding principles  
  - Retains ultimate responsibility and power  
  - Is accountable to the public trust and organization’s constituencies | - Supports the board with strategic information, ideas, and connections  
  - Manages the affairs of the organization by ensuring appropriate planning, coordination, and implementation of the programs to support the mission  
  - Retains immediate, or operational, responsibility and power | - Requires regular and open communication  
  - Requires willingness on everyone’s part to examine assumptions  
  - Benefits from regular and systematic feedback and assessment  
  - May need redefinition as the organization grows in size and complexity |
Q&A