

Recommended Practices	Yes or Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	No or Never
COMMUNICATION					
1. Our organizational communications adhere to the highest ethical and professional standards, as well as industry specific standards that exist, including principles of transparency, fairness and honesty. Our standards are clearly stated in writing and are part of the orientation of all employees and volunteers.					
2. Our nonprofit has a clearly defined, written communication plan that supports the organization’s mission and vision and guides daily activities. The communication plan is directly related to the strategic plan and demonstrates accountability to constituents and the public.					
3. Our communication plan includes goals, target audiences, key messages, intended outcomes, and a means to evaluate impacts. Appropriate strategies and tools are employed to achieve intended outcomes and may include: a Web site, advertising, public service announcements, promotional brochures and flyers, news releases, press conferences, feature stories, special events, editorial board meetings and opinion editorials.					
4. Our communication plan ensures that the organization is communicating in a clear and timely manner with those who request information. Our constituents are provided with ongoing opportunities to interact with the board and management regarding the organization’s activities and a system is in place for promptly and respectfully responding to grievances or complaints.					
5. Our nonprofit meets all federal and state requirements for public disclosure.					
6. Information provided to policy makers, the media and the general public becomes a matter of public record. Therefore, our nonprofit ensures that information is timely and accurate, and that the social and political context of information is clear to avoid misunderstanding or manipulation of the message.					
7. In serving the public trust, our nonprofit produces an annual report that contains information regarding activities and performance. The annual report includes:					
■ An explanation of the organization’s mission, activities and results;					
■ An explanation of how individuals can access programs/services;					
■ Overall financial information, including income and expense statements, balance sheet and functional expense allocations; and					
■ A list of board members, management staff, partners/supporters and donors.					
8. Our nonprofit encourages internal communication that welcomes alternative perspectives, invites and encourages participation at all levels, minimizes defensiveness, and builds and maintains camaraderie. Management solicits actively, listens carefully, and responds respectfully to the views of internal constituents.					

9. Internal communications are guided by a clear policy and practices manual, with information exchanged through regularly scheduled and attended meetings, regularly printed and/or e-mailed informational updates, an understood forum for suggestions, reports on meetings of the board of trustees and its committees, recognition, and social events.					
10. Our nonprofit has a written policy and procedures for developing public statements and positions on issues which clearly identify the primary organizational spokesperson(s) that are authorized to make public statements. These statements and positions represent the full range of views of the organization's constituencies. All internal constituents are aware of the statement and position policy.					
11. Our nonprofit openly communicates with other nonprofits to share and gather information on lessons learned and best practices and to avoid duplication of services.					
12. Our nonprofit ensures that all information provided to policy makers, the media and the general public is timely and accurate because it is a matter of public record and the context is clear to avoid misunderstanding or manipulation of the message.					
13. Our nonprofit has a media relations strategy through which appropriate representatives of the organization:					
a. Frequently update a press list of all the major newspapers, weeklies, television, radio and internet news sources;					
b. Build relationships with individual reporters and become a resource for local media;					
c. Coordinate messages to the media, ensuring that communications are well-rehearsed, brief, timely and newsworthy					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Communication Score	0%				

EVALUATION					
1. Our nonprofit has defined, ongoing and sustainable procedures in place for evaluating its programs, procedures, and outcomes in relation to its mission.					
2. Our nonprofit regularly monitors the satisfaction of service participants and constituents and provides a grievance procedure to address complaints.					
3. Information that is collected from persons served is kept confidential.					
4. Evaluation results are used to strengthen and improve our programs and activities by incorporating evaluation findings into strategic planning processes.					
5. Measurement informs the operational plan and is used to evaluate organizational effectiveness.					
6. Performance measures are realistic, specific, measurable, and appropriate to the size and scope of the organization and its constituents.					
a. Measurement includes information on satisfaction, activities, results, and community input.					
b. Measurement includes both qualitative and quantitative data.					
c. Measurement includes data on efficiency and effectiveness.					
7. Our evaluation strategy is ongoing and includes input from a wide variety of stakeholders including staff, board, funders, community members, etc.					
8. Evaluation results are communicated to a broad range of constituents including staff, board, clients, foundations, the public, etc.					
9. Our nonprofit shares relevant lessons learned with other nonprofits and funding sources.					
10. Our nonprofit organization utilizes external evaluators when appropriate and feasible. These evaluators follow the Guiding Principles for Evaluators set forth by the American Evaluation Association. http://www.eval.org/GPTraining/GP%20Training%20Final/gp.principles.pdf .					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Evaluation Score	0%				

FINANCIAL					
1. Our nonprofit has reviewed state and federal legal guidelines to verify the existence of appropriate policies, procedures and reporting mechanisms, and demonstrates compliance with all legal financial obligations.					
2. Our board members clearly understand how to read and interpret financial statements.					
3. Annually, our board reviews and approves an appropriate annual budget for the organization. While each board must determine the appropriate budget needed to achieve its mission, various industry benchmarks provide target ranges of 65-80% of expenditures for programs, and 20-35% for administration, fundraising, and evaluation.					
4. Our nonprofit generates accurate and relevant financial reports which include the comparison of actual to budgeted revenue and expenses, and which identify and explain any significant variances. These reports are provided to the board of trustees for regular review and discussion, on no less than a quarterly basis.					
5. Our nonprofit subjects its financial reports to an annual audit or independent CPA review.					
a. A nonprofit with annual total revenue of \$500,000 or more (not including government) must subject its financial reports to an annual audit by a Certified Public Accountant.					
b. A nonprofit with annual total revenue (not including government) over \$100,000 and no more than \$250,000 must have an independent review or audit of its finances.					
6. Financial audits are approved by the organization's board and certified by the chief executive officer and CFO.					
7. The auditor meets with the organization's board separately from management staff, and the board audit committee approves the financial report.					
8. To the extent possible given the size of the organization, our nonprofit ensures separation of specific financial duties as a system of checks and balances.					
9. Our nonprofit board of trustees has an audit committee that does not share members with, and works independently of, the finance committee.					
10. Our nonprofit CEO and CFO verify and certify the Form 990 or 990-PF before it is submitted to ensure that it is accurate, complete and filed on time.					
11. Our nonprofit has a system in place that allows individuals to report financial misconduct, without consequence for doing so (commonly referred to as a "whistle-blower protection policy").					

12. Our nonprofit board strictly prohibits financial loans to members of the board or officers.					
13. Our nonprofit board strictly prohibits financial loans to organization personnel.					
14. Our nonprofit plans for a balanced budget. In the event that a budget deficit occurs, the board is made aware of this expected outcome and participates fully in determining a plan to restore the budget to a balanced state.					
15. Our nonprofit has established and maintains a financial reserve which is equal to three to six months of operating expenses.					
16. Our non-profit has a process for producing financial projections at least quarterly.					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Financial Score	0%				

FUNDRAISING					
1. Our nonprofit board and executive are familiar with the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Code of Ethical Principles and Standards of Professional Practice, and ensure that all fundraising professionals acting on behalf of the organization adhere to these principles and standards. www.afpnet.org					
2. Our nonprofit complies with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations concerning fundraising practices.					
3. Our board assumes overall responsibility for raising sufficient funds to meet the organization's budgeted objectives.					
4. Our organization has secured a charitable solicitation license through the appropriate state office - often the Attorney General.					
5. Fundraising communications include clear, accurate, honest information about the organization (including charitable solicitation license number), its activities and the intended use of funds.					
6. Our nonprofit uses funds according to donor intent and complies with specific conditions for donations.					
7. Our nonprofit works toward achieving a balance between publicly recognizing charitable contributions and maintaining donor confidentiality when needed. We do not share or trade donor names with others unless given permission by the donor.					
8. Our nonprofit regularly communicates with donors regarding its activities and makes information available through multiple outlets.					
9. Our nonprofit seeks only the funds it needs to reasonably work toward achieving its mission over the foreseeable future (including endowment and reserve funds that are established to advance the organization's mission).					
10. Our nonprofit has policies in place that govern the receipt, disposal, and management of charitable gifts and grants.					
11. Any professional fundraiser that works on behalf of our nonprofit is registered with the appropriate state Attorney General, Charitable Trust Section.					
12. Our nonprofit is familiar with the legal distinctions between staff, consultants, and contract employees, and ensures we have the ability to adequately manage and supervise fundraising activity conducted by contractual service providers.					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Fundraising Score	0%				

GOVERNANCE					
1. If the board has ten or more members, an employee of the organization (typically the chief executive) serves as a voting member of the board and he/she does not serve as chair or treasurer of the board. If the board has less than ten members, no employees serves on the board as a voting member.					
2. Our board is comprised of at least five persons unrelated to each other or to staff to ensure appropriate deliberation, diversity of perspective and to minimize the opportunity for conflict of interest.					
3. Our board is comprised of individuals who represent the best interests of the organization.					
4. Our board has established a process for selecting new board members that will ensure adequate infusion of new ideas and community perspectives, while preserving institutional memory (e.g. term limits which may be applied to staggered classes of board volunteers).					
5. To demonstrate personal stake in the organization, our board members are expected to make personal financial contributions to the nonprofit as well as to raise funds from external sources.					
6. Board members (who are not employees) receive no monetary compensation.					
7. Board meetings are held at least on a quarterly basis and regular attendance is expected.					
8. At a minimum of every two years, the board reviews the organization's bylaws and mission statement and amends them as needed to reflect organizational growth and development.					
9. Annually, the board reviews and approves an annual budget for the organization. While each board must determine the appropriate budget needed to achieve its mission, various industry benchmarks provide target ranges of 65-80% of expenditures for programs, and 20-35% for administration, fundraising and evaluation.					
10. Annually, the board conducts a performance review of the chief executive. The chief executive's performance is assessed in light of organizational accomplishments, and the total compensation package (salary, raises, bonuses, and other benefits) reflects his/her performance as well as industry standards.					
11. The board has established an organizational transition plan to maintain daily operations during the time of a change in executive or board leadership.					
12. Nonprofit board members are responsible for making decisions in the interest of the organization and not in the interest of another entity, including themselves.					

13. The board has established conflict of interest policies regarding board members, staff, volunteers, consultants, and other contractors, and the board adheres to these policies in all dealings. The policies include an obligation of each board member to disclose all material facts and relationships and refrain from voting on any matter when there is a conflict of interest.					
14. The board has written job descriptions for each position.					
15. Each board member has signed a commitment form for job expectations that includes expectations on responsibilities, attendance, financial support, and committee work.					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Governance Score	0%				

HUMAN RESOURCES					
1. Our nonprofit complies with all local, state, and federal employment laws in hiring and employing personnel.					
2. If the organization employs staff, the board annually reviews its overall compensation structure, using industry-based surveys of salaries and benefits. The board has established policies on employee benefits, which may include:					
■ Medical insurance;					
■ Retirement plans;					
■ Sick leave, family leave, vacation, and other paid time off					
■ Other benefits as may be appropriate.					
3. Our nonprofit has adopted a set of policies and procedures for personnel. All employees receive a copy of the policies and procedures and submit a signed acknowledgement of such.					
4. Our nonprofit employs skilled individuals who are suitable for the positions they occupy (paid or unpaid) and are committed to the goals, values, and objectives of the organization.					
5. Our nonprofit has established and abides by a broad and encompassing equal opportunity employment policy.					
6. Our nonprofit strives toward employing personnel and volunteers who reflect the diversity of the community, as appropriate for program effectiveness.					
7. Our nonprofit supports the education and development of personnel and provides them with opportunities for growth and advancement.					
8. Our nonprofit provides all staff with clear, current job descriptions and the tools they need to produce quality work.					
9. Our nonprofit has a system in place for the succession of key employees, most notably for the chief executive officer and key board leadership.					
10. Our nonprofit has established employee record retention policies and procedures that are consistent with applicable laws and best industry practices.					
11. Our organization considers best industry practices as well as our own unique circumstances when establishing policies and procedures.					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Human Resources Score	0%				

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
1. Our nonprofit has information systems in place that provide timely, accurate, and relevant information.					
2. Our nonprofit has a written technology plan that is integrated into its short- and long-term strategic and operational plans.					
3. Our nonprofit has technology use and security policies that address staff use, and that prescribe how all organizational information is gathered and stored, how accuracy is maintained, how and what information is backed up, and to whom information is made available.					
4. Our nonprofit has designated responsibility for maintaining the organization's information systems to more than one staff member, volunteer, or board member (one person should be primary and at least one should be back-up).					
5. All staff have received current training to use those systems that are relevant to their work.					
6. Our nonprofit maintains and is ready to implement a catastrophic recovery plan. The plan includes hardware and software inventory for insurance purposes. Off-site recovery includes back-up copies of key data and information, and allows for remote and/or alternative access in the event of an emergency.					
7. Our nonprofit invests in appropriate telecommunications equipment, up-to-date, compatible computer hardware and software, and Internet access to enhance its ability to achieve its mission.					
8. Our nonprofit has developed computer networking strategies that are appropriate to the size of the organization.					
9. Our nonprofit allocates sufficient resources to train our board, employees, and volunteers in the appropriate use of its technology systems.					
10. Our nonprofit monitors ongoing technological developments that have the potential to impact our information systems or mission.					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Information Technology Score	0%				

PLANNING					
1. Our nonprofit has a clearly defined, written mission statement that guides the overall aims and activities of the organization.					
2. Our mission is reviewed by the board periodically to consider societal and community changes.					
3. When planning activities, our nonprofit is responsive to community needs and solicits input from a variety of sources such as staff, board members, and other constituents.					
4. Our nonprofit consults with counterparts in our field to determine the need for service and the best use of community resources.					
5. Our nonprofit has created a written, operational/strategic plan for implementation of its activities:					
a. The plan reflects the results of an environmental scan that includes information on strengths and weaknesses/challenges facing the organization, as well as opportunities for and perceived threats to mission achievement.					
b. The plan includes clearly defined goals and objectives that are set by the organization to benefit constituents.					
c. The plan clearly defines specific activities and responsibility for their implementation.					
d. The plan serves as a useful management tool for measuring activities and outcomes and is tied to a solid budget.					
e. The plan provides a framework for regular progress reports and is reviewed and/or updated regularly.					
6. Our nonprofit has established a formal risk management plan, which is monitored by a dedicated committee of the board (e.g. audit committee or executive committee).					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Planning Score	0%				

PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY					
1. Our nonprofit advocates publicly on behalf of its mission and organizational values.					
2. Our nonprofit advocates for the sector with regard to tax-exemption and nonprofit status.					
3. Our organization participates in public policy formation.					
4. Our nonprofit maintains a sound understanding of the current policy environment and the resulting consequences for the public.					
5. Our nonprofit has a written public policy and advocacy plan that defines how decisions are made, as well as the scope of activity, time, and resources to be allocated to advocacy and public policy work.					
6. Our nonprofit has developed specific strategies to address key issues facing the sector and should include their constituents in those efforts.					
7. Our nonprofit assists constituents in public and civic engagement by encouraging voting and other citizen participation in local, state, and federal policy-making efforts.					
8. When engaged in lobbying activities that are subject to state and federal reporting requirements, our nonprofit files accurate and timely reports with the IRS and Secretary of State.					
9. Our nonprofit ensures that the activities of the organization are nonpartisan.					
10. Our nonprofit board has considered both the 501(h) election and the "insubstantial part" rule related to financial expenditures for lobbying to determine which reporting mechanism is most appropriate for the organization.					
11. Our nonprofit ensures that the information released to the general public, the media, and to policy makers is timely and accurate, and that the social and political context of the information is clear in order to avoid misunderstanding or manipulation of the message.					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Public Policy and Advocacy Scores			0%		

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES					
1. Our nonprofit is open to strategic alliances as a means to help achieve goals, improve effectiveness, and efficiency and/or strengthen community connections with clients and others.					
2. When making decisions regarding alliances, our organization ensures that they are in line with the strategic goals of the organization and will impact the brand and image of the organization positively.					
3. Our nonprofit knows about and understands the services provided by other organizations in our community and/or service area.					
4. Our nonprofit promotes other organizations' services to enhance customer choice whenever possible.					
5. Our nonprofit cooperates and collaborates with agencies and other community organizations to ensure effective use of charitable resources and to advance our mission.					
6. As appropriate, our nonprofit fosters relationships with similar organizations and state, regional, and national associations to support advancement of our mission.					
7. On a regular basis, our nonprofit conducts an environmental scan to identify organizations providing similar services and to assess our relationship to those organizations.					
8. Our nonprofit ensures board approval with full knowledge of our legal obligations and liabilities when undertaking responsibility for fiscal sponsorship of another organization. (Note: the IRS views fiscal agency differently from fiscal sponsorship: get legal advice before proceeding.)					
9. Our nonprofit works to establish mutual understanding among government, nonprofit and for-profit sectors.					
10. As appropriate, our nonprofit assists smaller nonprofits through alliances and resource sharing.					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Strategic Alliances Score	0%				

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY					
1. Our nonprofit complies with all legal and other required reporting procedures regarding our performance.					
2. Our nonprofit uses our resources responsibly for the purpose of serving the public interest. Financial audits are approved by the organization's board and certified by the chief executive officer and the CFO of the organization.					
3. Our nonprofit has established, achieves and regularly measures clearly defined levels of performance in our activities and we share those results with the public.					
4. Our nonprofit adheres to established, professional standards.					
5. Our constituents are provided with ongoing opportunities to interact with the board and management regarding the organization's activities.					
6. Our nonprofit produces an annual report that contains information regarding activities and performance. The annual report includes:					
■ An explanation of the organization's mission, activities and results;					
■ An explanation of how individuals can access programs/services;					
■ Overall financial information, including income and expense statements, balance sheet and functional expense allocations; and					
■ A list of board members, management staff, partners/supporters, and donors.					
7. Our nonprofit produces, on an annual basis, a financial report including income and expense statements, balance sheet, and functional expense allocations. These statements are made available to our members and/or directors as required.					
8. Our nonprofit holds public meetings to gather and distribute information about approaches, goals, and effectiveness in carrying out its mission.					
9. Our nonprofit openly communicates with other nonprofits to share and gather information on lessons learned and best practices.					
10. Information regarding our fees and services are readily available to the public.					
11. Our nonprofit has a system in place that allows individuals to report financial misconduct, without consequence for doing so (commonly referred to as a whistle-blower protection policy).					
12. Our nonprofit ensures confidentiality and non-discriminatory service to our constituents.					
13. Our nonprofit meets all federal requirements for public disclosure.					
14. Our nonprofit has a written, mandatory document retention and periodic destruction policy, which includes guidelines for handling electronic files and voicemail, back-up procedures, archiving of documents, and regular check-ups of the reliability of the system.					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0

Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Transparency and Accountability Score	0%				

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT					
1. Our nonprofit has developed a volunteer engagement plan that includes the following elements:					
a. Purpose statement – identifies what benefit our organization will receive from the effective use of volunteers (including board members).					
b. Organizational assessment – analyzes our organization’s readiness for volunteers.					
c. Budget – does our organization have the financial resources to support a volunteer program?					
d. Roles and responsibilities – clearly defines roles, responsibilities and relationships between staff and volunteers.					
2. A written position description is created for every volunteer position within our organization.					
3. Volunteer recruitment activities are targeted and specific, clearly identifying the work to be done, the hours to be committed and the intended impacts of the volunteer activity.					
4. Our nonprofit has established screening procedures to ensure the safety of clients and minimize the potential liability to the organization.					
5. Volunteer assignments are made with careful consideration of the volunteer’s skills, needs, and interests.					
6. Our nonprofit has constructed an intentional system for orientation and training of volunteers where in the volunteers clearly understand the limits of their work, as well as the latitude they may have for decision making on behalf of the organization.					
a. We have a current manual of policies and procedures that is accessible for all volunteers, including attendance policies, confidentiality policies, grievance procedures, and other key information to minimize risk and maximize effectiveness.					
b. We have a system whereby volunteers are trained with the specific skills and knowledge needed to perform their volunteer roles.					
c. We have an ongoing orientation/communication plan to keep volunteers apprised of changes within the organization as well as enhanced opportunities for volunteer involvement.					
7. The volunteer program is structured so that each volunteer has a direct connection to an identified supervisor, and understands who to communicate with in the event the supervisor is absent.					
8. Our nonprofit organization has a clearly articulated and documented grievance procedure whereby volunteers may address issues including, but not limited to, harassment and discrimination.					

9. Our nonprofit organization has clearly articulated and documented accountability and discipline procedures for volunteers that address lack of performance as well as policy violations.					
10. Our nonprofit organization has a thoughtful recognition system which provides individual and group recognition, and celebrates the impact of volunteers.					
11. Our nonprofit organization considers and promotes benefits to potential and current volunteers, and communicates those benefits to promote meaningful engagement.					
12. The performance of a volunteer is evaluated regularly (at least annually) with the supervisor through a formal process. <u>**Note: the depth of performance evaluations should be appropriate to the role and scope of service the volunteer provides. Other volunteers may be evaluated in much less detail and might only have a program of required on going training and highly established hierachy of recognized responsibilities that serves as feedback for performance.</u>					
13. The volunteer program as a whole is evaluated annually to assess cost and benefits of the program, to document impact on mission achievement, and to direct future volunteer initiatives					
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Multiply Column Total by Number of Points	3	2	1	0	-1
Column Total	0	0	0	0	0
Volunteer Engagement Score	0%				