

ACE - Association Master

INTRODUCTION

This survey is designed to help you and your colleagues assess how well the chief executive is performing in several key areas. By conducting an assessment, the chief executive has the opportunity to receive the needed insight into his or her strengths, limitations, and overall performance. The assessment of the chief executive is an opportunity for the board to express support for the executive and strengthen his or her performance in the future. The consequences of failing to assess the chief executive can lead to mistrust, strained working relationships, ongoing poor performance, and even turnover.

Some things to note as you begin the survey:

It should take you 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

We ask that you keep in mind that BoardSource uses the term “chief executive” to refer to any nonprofit staff member who reports directly to the board, regardless of title (chief executive officer, executive director, president and CEO, etc.).

To encourage candor, responses from board members will be aggregated and included in a summary report. The chief executive’s responses will be reported in a separate column so differences between the perceptions of the chief executive and board can be compared. All comments recorded in the open-ended sections of the survey will be included in the summary report exactly as they were entered. No personally identifiable information will be included in the final analysis.

The survey uses a 5-point rating scale based on the following definitions:

- 1 - Unsatisfactory
- 2 - Needs Improvement
- 3 - Meets Expectations
- 4 - Exceeds Expectations
- 5 - Exceptional
- NA / Don't Know - Excluded from analysis

*This tool, developed through a collaborative effort between **BoardSource and ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership**, features customized terminology and questions appropriate for the association sector.*

Section One: Annual Performance Goals

Annual performance goals assist the chief executive with setting direction and priorities, and serve to clarify expectations between the board and the executive.

The chief executive's annual goals can focus on organizational priorities (e.g., increasing public awareness of the organization or doubling the membership), leadership tasks that the executive has been charged with (e.g., reorganizing a specific program or service offered by the association or increasing the number of public appearances on behalf of the organization), or professional development goals (e.g., improving communication skills, building consensus).

The following performance goals were established for the chief executive of your association.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in pursuing or achieving each of these goals.

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
Click to write Statement 1 (Goal 1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Click to write Statement 2 (Goal 2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Click to write Statement 3 (Goal 3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Click to write Statement 4 (Goal 4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Click to write Statement 5 (Goal 5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Click to write Statement 6 (Goal 6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Click to write Statement 7 (Goal 7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Click to write Statement 8 (Goal 8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Click to write Statement 9 (Goal 9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Click to write Statement 10 (Goal 10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have specific comments about the chief executive's performance on these annual goals?

Section Two: Core Competencies for Association Chief Executives

While there is no single model for effective nonprofit leaders, a number of core areas of responsibility are essential for success. These competencies -- planning, administration, board relations, financial management, communications and public relations, and fundraising -- will be covered in this section. At the end of this section, you will also have an opportunity to include additional comments.

2.1 Strategic Thinking and Planning

Preparing for the future is one of the most critical leadership responsibilities of the chief executive. Working with the board and staff, the chief executive must develop a shared vision for the future of the association, build understanding around the mission, and develop appropriate goals and strategies to advance that mission.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in the following areas:

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
2.1a In collaboration with the board, articulated a clear vision for the future of the association (Assc_2_1_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.1b Used the mission of the association as a guide in making decisions (Assc_2_1_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.1c Engaged the board and staff in a meaningful process to set priorities and develop a written strategic plan (Assc_2_1_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.1d Effectively led the organization in assessing and responding to changes in the association's environment (Assc_2_1_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.1e Oversaw the development of appropriate goals and objectives to advance the mission (Assc_2_1_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.1f Effectively led the staff in implementing the strategic plan and annual goals (Assc_2_1_8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.1g Engaged board members, collectively and individually, to think strategically and adapt to changing needs (Assc_2_1_9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any specific comments about the chief executive's performance on this core competency?

2.2 Administration

The chief executive has overall responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the association. The chief executive works with staff to develop, maintain, and use systems and resources that facilitate the effective operation of the association. The chief executive relies on the board for input and feedback on programmatic direction. The board, in turn, ensures that the chief executive is managing the association efficiently and effectively.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in the following areas:

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
2.2a Displayed a thorough knowledge of the association's mission and programs (Assc_2_2_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.2b Oversaw the effective and efficient operation of the association (Assc2_2_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.2c Managed the successful delivery of programs and services to members (Assc_2_2_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.2d Recruited, developed, and retained the staff needed to implement the annual work plan (Assc_2_2_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.2e Minimized risk by ensuring that appropriate and up-to-date organizational systems, policies, and procedures are in place (Assc_2_2_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.2f Ensured compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements (Assc_2_2_6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any specific comments about the chief executive's performance on this core competency?

2.3A Governance and Board Relations

Together, the chief executive and the board form the leadership team of the association. Each arm of the team draws upon its own unique strengths and abilities. The chief executive and board have joint responsibility for developing and maintaining a strong working relationship and a system for sharing information that enables the board to effectively carry out its governance role.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in the following areas:

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
2.3a Maintained an effective working relationship with the board, characterized by open communication, respect, and trust (Assc_2_3A_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3b Working with the board chair, focused board meetings on topics of highest priority that need board attention and involvement (Assc_2_3A_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3c Provided board members with the appropriate information needed to support informed decision making and effective governance (Assc_2_3A_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3d Served as an effective liaison between board members and staff (Assc_2_3A_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3e Supported board development, especially recruitment, in conjunction with board leadership (Assc_2_3A_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3f Worked to leverage the talent and expertise of individual board members (Assc_2_3A_6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any specific comments about the chief executive's performance on this core competency?

2.3B Staff Leadership and Management

The chief executive provides leadership and support to staff. This includes supervising individual employees and coordinating the collective effort of the staff to carry out the association's work. The chief executive must establish open lines of communication, share information, and empower staff to take appropriate action. For their part, staff members need to understand their responsibilities and the association's priorities, as well as have adequate resources to carry out their jobs.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in the following areas:

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
2.3g Maintained an effective working relationship with the staff, characterized by open communication, respect, and trust (Assc_2_3B_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3h Focused staff attention on issues of highest priority to the association (Assc_2_3B_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3i Served as an effective liaison between the board and staff (Assc_2_3B_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3j Supported the professional development of staff (Assc_2_3B_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3k Ensured the association has adequate infrastructure, such as staff, facilities, volunteers, and technologies (Assc_2_3B_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any specific comments about the chief executive's performance on this core competency?

2.4 Financial Management

Ensuring that resources are managed wisely is important. The chief executive's role is to see that the association's goals and strategic plan serve as the basis for sound financial management, that solid budgeting and accounting systems are in place, and that appropriate financial controls and risk-management strategies protect the association's assets.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in the following areas:

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
2.4a Made sound financial decisions and recommendations based on a thorough understanding of the association's overall financial picture (Assc_2_4_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.4b Allocated financial and human resources appropriately to achieve the association's goals and objectives (Assc_2_4_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.4c Oversaw the association's annual budgeting process, regularly tracked financial performance against budget, and presented financial statements in a timely and accurate manner for review and action (Assc_2_4_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.4d Implemented appropriate internal controls to protect the association from fraud and abuse (Assc_2_4_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.4e Ensured sound financial stewardship of the association's contributions and organizational assets (excluding investments in the endowment) (Assc_2_4_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any specific comments about the chief executive's performance on this core competency?

2.5 Communications and Advocacy

The chief executive, whether in the role of primary spokesperson or otherwise, often serves as the "public face" for the association. This role has three major components: effectively promoting the association, advocating for the

mission and work of the association, and building relationships with constituent or stakeholder groups critical to the success of the association. It includes *communications* activities related to positioning the association and *advocacy* efforts aimed at advancing the association's industry or profession.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in the following areas:

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
2.5a Served as an articulate and effective spokesperson for the industry or profession (Assc_2_5_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.5b Maintained an open dialogue with the association's members (Assc_2_5_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.5c Established and maintained positive relationships with individuals and groups that impact the success of the association, including thought leaders in the field, educators, policy makers, and donors (Assc_2_5_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.5d Exercised sound judgment and appropriately involved the board in advocacy and communication issues related to the industry or profession (Assc_2_5_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any specific comments about the chief executive's performance on this core competency?

2.6 Fundraising

The chief executive, in partnership with the board and appropriate staff, is responsible for developing and implementing fundraising systems and strategies that enable the association to meet its financial development goals and carry out its programs and operations.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in the following areas:

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
2.6a Served as an effective fundraiser in soliciting charitable contributions (Assc_2_6_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.6b Ensured that the organization developed appropriate fundraising strategies and policies (Assc_2_6_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.6c Effectively supported the board and staff in major fundraising initiatives (Assc_2_6_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.6d Cultivated and maintained relationships with major donors and key supporters of the organization (Assc_2_6_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.6e Ensured that the organization had the appropriate infrastructure to support fundraising efforts (e.g., staff, information systems, processes) (Assc_2_6_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.6f Established a common understanding of the role and importance of sustained fundraising to the organization's success (Assc_2_6_6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any specific comments about the chief executive's performance on this core competency?

Section Three: Personal Leadership Qualities

3.1 Leadership Skills

Beyond the core functional responsibilities of the chief executive, a number of additional leadership skills are important to the chief executive's success.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in the following areas:

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
3.1a A clear commitment to the association's mission and values (Assc_3_1_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.1b An ability to motivate and engage others in advancing the mission of the association (Assc_3_1_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.1c An ability to learn from the successes and failures of the past in planning for the future (Assc_3_1_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.1d A willingness to ask difficult questions and challenge organizational assumptions (Assc_3_1_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.1e An awareness of trends and information in the external environment that may impact the association (Assc_3_1_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.1f A broker of ideas with the ability to facilitate visionary thinking throughout the organization (Assc_3_1_6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.1g Courage and flexibility in leading during times of change (Assc_3_1_7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.1h A strong sense of moral and ethical integrity (Assc_3_1_8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any specific comments about the chief executive's leadership skills?

3.2 Interpersonal Skills

Beyond the core functional responsibilities of the chief executive, a number of additional interpersonal skills are important to the chief executive's success.

Please indicate whether the chief executive met your expectations in the following areas:

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exceptional (5)	NA/Don't Know ()
3.2a Effective problem-solving skills (Assc_3_2_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.2b Good judgment in decision making (Assc_3_2_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.2c Effective communication skills (Assc_3_2_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.2d The ability to build trusting relationships (Assc_3_2_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.2e The ability to balance diverging and competing points of view (Assc_3_2_5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.2f The ability to accept constructive criticism (Assc_3_2_6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any specific comments about the chief executive's interpersonal skills?

Section Four: Accomplishments and Challenges

While the quantitative ratings in the previous sections provide an important snapshot of the board's assessment of the chief executive in key areas of responsibility and performance, this section of the survey provides an opportunity to include thoughts and insights about the chief executive that cannot be captured in numeric scores. Please answer the following open-ended questions.

Assessing the Past

The following questions consider the overall achievements of the chief executive over the past year and will serve as the foundation for discussion between the board and chief executive.

4.1 What were the most significant achievements of the chief executive in the past year?

4.2 During the past year, what difficult issues did the association face, and how did the chief executive address them?

4.3 Do you have any suggestions about areas of improvement for the chief executive?

Planning for the Future

While the majority of the questions in this assessment focus on past performance, the final questions look to the future. These questions will assist the board and chief executive in establishing the executive's performance goals and priorities for the upcoming year.

In thinking about the year ahead . . .

4.4 What are the two most important organizational priorities for the chief executive?

4.5 What are the two most important leadership tasks for the chief executive?

4.6 What are the two most important professional development goals for the chief executive?

Organization Information – Provided to CEO ONLY

Please provide the following information to describe your organization.

This information will be used by BoardSource only for research purposes. It is our intent to create benchmarks for organizations with similar characteristics and include this information in the summary report as soon as we have sufficient data to create meaningful comparisons. All benchmarking information will be reported in aggregate form and no individual organization's information will be reported.

Briefly describe the primary program(s)/service(s) of the association.

Select the description that most accurately describes your association:

▼ Professional association - individuals only (1) ... Association management company (7)

What is your organization's IRS classification?

▼ 501(c)(3) public charity (1) ... Other (5)

What is your organization's budget for the current fiscal year?

▼ Less than \$250,000 (1) ... More than \$25 Million (6)

How long have you been the chief executive?

▼ Less than 1 year (1) ... More than 8 years (5)

How many full-time employees do you have? Please count any part-time employees as 0.5.

Is this the first time you have been formally evaluated by this organization?

Yes (1)

No (0)

If you wish to review or make edits to your responses, you may click the "previous page" button now to do so.

Otherwise, please click on the 'Submit' button to submit your survey.

Thank you for your participation!

If you have any questions about your assessment, please contact us at Assessments@BoardSource.org.
