The 14 Attributes of a Thriving Non-Profit

Often on this blog I write about what non-profits are doing wrong and how to fix it. After all, “non-profits are messy” is more than just my tagline — it’s my mantra. And my mission is to help non-profits clean up the mess.



- [ ] 1) The best non-profit organizations are seen as ‘workplaces of choice.
- [ ] 2) The Executive Director is a visible, vocal, and effective public champion for the organization.
- [ ] 3) Financial stability.
- [ ] 4) Fundraising streams are balanced, diverse and sophisticated.
- [ ] 5) Board is diverse and reflective of the community it serves.
- [ ] 6) Board is clear about its responsibilities, takes them seriously, and executes well.
- [ ] 7) Programs are mission-centric.
- [ ] 8) Programs are evaluated to determine impact.
- [ ] 9) The best non-profit organizations have a clear, strong, and compelling external presence.
- [ ] 10) An intelligent and integrated strategy for growing and engaging stakeholders in the work.
- [ ] 11) Regular performance reviews and assessments for both staff and board.
- [ ] 12) Board and staff have a strong leadership pipeline and solid bench strength.
- [ ] 13) A thoughtful long-term strategy developed jointly by board and staff.
- [ ] 14) The Board Chair and Executive Director have an amazing partnership.

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