



## **Transitional Leadership with an Interim Executive Director**

Did you know that there are ten different organizational scenarios where an Interim Executive Director could be of assistance in helping an organization through a time of transition? Whether your nonprofit is facing the planned retirement of a long-time leader, an involuntary change in the leadership position, a situation requiring a long leave of absence, a start-up opportunity, or any of the other scenarios, an Interim Executive Director may be the best option for your team.

While every situation is different, typically, an Interim Executive Director will spend between seven and nine months working with a nonprofit once the contract to become a temporary salaried employee has been finalized. The nonprofit should expect to pay a negotiated salary but no benefits. Travel expenses, if the position is a hybrid model (when the Interim works in person part of the time and remotely for the rest), would be part of the negotiation. While long-term strategic planning is typically not a component of the interim work, strategic visioning, creation of common goals, information analysis, consensus building, and a thorough organizational assessment can be expected during the transition period.

Especially when faced with an emergency departure, some organizations may feel a sense of immediacy regarding the need to hire the next executive director, but by working with an Interim Executive Director, nonprofits can find the breathing room they need to assess their current situation and future needs. By bringing in an Interim Executive Director with an independent perspective and specialized skills, the organization gains a professional advisor and partner that can help navigate change both in personnel and possibly organizational focus. An Interim Executive Director is not hired simply to “keep the balls in the air” or “maintain the status quo.” Instead, this transitional leader will work with key board members and employees to prioritize and manage the day-to-day operations while also assessing what the organization needs as they prepare for their next leader.

The typical process for engaging an Interim Executive Director starts with some due diligence on both sides. Honest conversations about current organizational strengths, weaknesses, and immediate needs, plus transparency regarding financials, will help bring clarity to initial goals and the expected timeline leading up to the hiring of the next leader. Such “advance work,” prior to signing a contract, will help both the nonprofit and the Interim understand the potential benefits for this transitional relationship.

As a graduate of the Third Sector Company’s Interim Executives Academy, Jennifer Wheeler, president of WRG Corporate Services, can assist your organization as it navigates this important time of transition. Wheeler will guide your nonprofit through the Six Phases of Strategic Interim Leadership developed by Third Sector Company. While the steps are sequential, the process allows

for great flexibility and a tremendous amount of input from board leadership, team members, and even partners.

With Jennifer's 30+ years in nonprofit leadership and her expertise in both strengthening the foundational aspects of organizations and strategic visioning for longevity, she can assist your group in diagnosing your current situation, undertaking short-term planning, and defining and executing interventions that will lead to long-term success including developing components needed for a successful search for your next organizational leader.

To learn more about the Interim Executive Director role and hiring process, please feel free to contact Third Sector Company for an initial conversation about what to expect. Third Sector Company does not charge a fee for introductory discussions. To better understand Third Sector Company leadership services, visit <https://thirdsectorcompany.com/services>

For additional information or to talk with Jennifer Wheeler and [WRG Corporate Services](#) about an Interim Executive Director opportunity, connect with her at [jennifer@wrgcorpservices.com](mailto:jennifer@wrgcorpservices.com) or 208-241-4127.