

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & STAFF EVALUATION

Presented by Laurie Dean Torrell
Executive Director,
Just Buffalo Literary Center
Ldeant@justbuffalo.org

Why spend the time talking about Staff Evaluation?

To be well prepared for Erie County Cultural Funding Application.

Because the IRS asks all nonprofits to describe their process for setting chief executive compensation in Schedule O of the Form 990—and performance evaluation is assumed to be a critical component.

Other reasons?

BECAUSE ...

Your ability to recruit and retain top talent – staff, board & volunteer – is arguably among the most crucial success factor for your nonprofit.

A thoughtful Annual Evaluation/Review process can help you do this.

It is essential for retaining top performers
& can also be used with volunteers – non salaried personnel

The real reason it's worth spending the time to discuss this is that it's a tool that can have significant impact on your organization, the people you work with and even on you yourself.

When you think of the topic of Evaluations of ED and staff, what are the connotations?

Something positive ...or negative?

Something easy ...or hard?

Something you want to do (or have done to you) ...
or don't want to do or have done?

From this day forward, I want you to think of evaluation reviews as a GIFT: The gift of fully valuing; of undivided attention; of listening; of honesty.

BASIC POLICY

From Just Buffalo's Erie County Application:

Articulate how your organization evaluates its programs, services, and/or other organizational initiatives:

... In addition, Just Buffalo invests a significant amount of time nurturing its most critical human resources. Each year the board conducts a self-evaluation; the Board President evaluates the Executive Director; and the Executive Director does the same for each staff member. This promotes open communication and transparency throughout the organization and helps to inform its activities and needs for the coming year.

Just Buffalo's Executive Director Review & Compensation Policy

The board is responsible for selecting the Executive Director (E.D.), approving the E.D. job description, evaluating the E.D. and determining E.D. compensation.

The board establishes, reviews and approves Executive Director compensation each year in conjunction with the annual budgeting process. In addition, a formal compensation review is done at least every 2 years including review and benchmarking of comparable peer positions, industry standards and replacement cost for position.

The Executive Director shall not be present for the board vote and discussion of Executive Director compensation.

Executive Director Review - Overview of Process

Board President or designee leads the process. (ASI we used BOD President +1)

Evaluation tool/form determined.

Evaluation questions sent to full board for feedback and return by (date).

Feedback compiled and key points prepared to include in ED Annual Review meeting.

ED asked to complete self-evaluation questions & return in advance or bring to Review meeting.

ED Review meeting held. Allow 2 hours.

Summary of meeting completed and shared with full board.

Final letter from the board president to the ED written, summarizing the outcome - with notes about the year's accomplishments, decisions on goals for the year, summaries of any concerns or recommendations for improvement, codifying the decision on the raise, providing a formal document that concludes the process and lays the foundation for next year's process.

E.D. Evaluation Sample: Relationship to Board

Keeps the Board informed of organization activities, progress, and problems.	
Is receptive to Board member ideas and suggestions.	
Makes sound recommendations for Board actions.	
Facilitates the decision process for the Board.	
Accepts constructive Board criticism and suggestions for improvement.	
Gives constructive criticism in a friendly, firm and positive way.	
Follows up on all problems and issues brought to the Executive Director's attention.	
Comments	
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Strategic Management Skills

Manages well-planned office operations.	
Prepares all necessary reports and keeps accurate records.	
Speaks and writes clearly.	
Achieves organizational goals and objectives.	
Is proactive in attitude and action.	
Adequately follows through on set plans.	
Projects a vision for the organization.	
Comments	
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Staff Development

Implements effective staffing plan to meet goals.	
Hires and maintains competent staff members.	
Develops/implements appropriate personnel policies.	
Encourages staff development.	
Works effectively with staff in a team environment.	
Maintains high morale among staff with ability to complete ambitious projects.	
Comments	
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Oversight of Program, Operations & Finances

Prepares a sound budget for board consideration.	
Manages finances in accord with the approved budget.	
Displays common sense and good judgment in business transactions.	
Develops new sources of revenue and diversified revenue streams sufficient for ASI to meet its mission.	
Effectively supervises facilities and operations.	
Comments	
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Personal & Professional Attributes

Appropriately represents organization in the community.	
Projects a professional demeanor.	
Participates in professional activities.	
Achieves annual professional goals.	
Comments	
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Services to Constituents

Understands and stays current with the needs of constituents.	
Establishes effective means of communication with constituents.	
Focuses activities on serving constituents' identified needs.	
Implements strong re-grant program with timely awards.	
Works effectively with wide variety of constituents including arts organizations, artists, funders and colleagues.	
Accepts constructive criticism from the constituents and responds appropriately.	
Comments	
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Board E.D. Evaluation Questions

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S EVALUATION

- **What impressed you the most about the Executive Director's performance this year?**
- **Is there anything you'd like to specifically praise?**
- **Did you have any concerns regarding the Executive Director's performance this year?**
- **Do you have any recommendations for the Executive Director to support his continued professional development?**
- **What should be priority areas for the Executive Director over the next year?**
- **Do you have any additional comments regarding the Executive Director that have a bearing on this evaluation?**

STAFF REVIEW: IT DOES NOT NEED TO BE COMPLICATED

Set a time of at least 90 minutes for meeting with each staff member.

MOST IMPORTANT: Give them a set of questions to consider, answer in advance, and bring to meeting to discuss.

Prepare by reviewing job description, notes from last review, progress towards goals, and most importantly, by reflecting deeply and making notes about things you want to be sure to discuss.

Lead with giving them your undivided attention as they share their answers. Make notes throughout. Add your feedback as you go and at the end.

Come in a spirit of giving the best of who you are to the meeting, of listening deeply and learning things you might never have considered.

BASIC REVIEW QUESTIONS

Staff – Supervisor/side by side columns

Review of past year

What do you see as highlights and accomplishments from this past year?

Challenges

What has been challenging or has not worked well?

Plans and key goals for coming year

What do you see as the organization's/and your own key goals for the coming year?

Professional and personal development

What are you thinking about your career goals, job satisfaction, and work-life balance? What are your plans for continuing to develop professionally?

Other Notes

What else would you like to comment on (overall organization, leadership, collaboration, concerns, anything)?

Expanded Questions (used in 2014):

Reviewing your job description and thinking about your work over the past year:

How would you rate your own performance – in terms of accomplishing key goals, working at capacity, contributing to advancement of the organization's mission?

What do you feel especially good about? What have you enjoyed? What helps you work at optimum capacity?

What has been difficult, frustrating or a challenge? What keeps you from working at capacity?

Are there any areas you feel could be improved or strengthened?

How has your job compared to your expectations over the past 12 months?

How would you rate your job satisfaction overall? What would make you leave Just Buffalo?

Expanded Questions:

What are your plans for continuing to develop professionally and how can Just Buffalo support this? What might a customized personal development plan for YOU look like?

How satisfied do you feel about the people you work with? Do you have any feedback that you think would be beneficial to address with other team members or in the context of our work together as a whole?

What feedback or observations can you share to help make me a better supervisor and leader? If you were me, what would you do differently?

Where do you think Just Buffalo is doing a good job?

Where could Just Buffalo do a better job?

Expanded Questions:

What - if anything- related to work keeps you up at night?

What do you see as the organizations'/and your own key goals for the coming year?

If you made a work "WISH LIST" what would be on it?

How do you think you can best contribute to the next phase of Just Buffalo's work over the coming 3 years – seeing through JB40 and making the strongest contribution we can to the community?

What else would you like to comment on (overall organization, leadership, collaboration, concerns, anything)?

***Include Review and update of:**

Job Description

C.V./Resume and bio

File Photograph/Head Shot

Key policies related to position

Compensation & Benefits

Great Resource: [Bridgespan.org](https://bridgespan.org)

Performance Assessment: Setting the Stage for an Effective Process

What are the elements of a successful evaluation process? Often linked to fiscal year results, a comprehensive review also recognizes successes, identifies improvement areas, and raises key strategic questions. Goals should reflect financial, operating, and strategic metrics, but also address leadership skills, interpersonal abilities, and personal traits as they relate to job effectiveness. Referencing specific examples can provide critical context, and sometimes a self-evaluation component can help highlight synergies or missed connections.

Concluding Thoughts

I am passionate about this topic because of the impact honest, thoughtful evaluations have had on me. And coming to see how rare they are.

A team will tend to function at the level of its lowest functioning member. Must have strong commitment to dealing with problems and even firing w/necessary.

There will be Surprises ... even from people you know well and work with every day.

It's always better to know ...