



# Securing the Future

Succession Planning  
to Ensure your Organization  
Continues to  
SOAR

# Today's Plan

Introductions

Succession Planning: Definition, Roles,  
and a Step-by-Step Process

Expected and Unexpected Departure  
Planning

Transfer of Knowledge  
Plans/Onboarding

Questions and Discussion





# Introductions

Please tell us:

Your name and position on the Board.

Your organization and why you love it.

How long have you served on this Board?

Imagine your organization receives a \$10,000 grant to work on succession planning, how would you use it?

**ABOUT S.O.A.R.**



**SOAR**

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s o l u t i o n s

# Objectives

Learn something new about other board members in the QAHN's Network ✓

Understand the importance of succession planning

Understand the difference between a succession policy, a succession plan and a transfer of knowledge plan

Identify concrete ways to recruit new board members





# Why Succession Planning

Succession planning helps organizations prepare for transitions, retain institutional knowledge, and ensure long-term sustainability.

## Some Statistics...

WHY?

Not-for-profit organization with no formal succession plan for its board.

78%

Source: Boardable (2024)

Board members who will resign in the next five years.

67%

Organizations say they are experiencing volunteer shortages.

65%

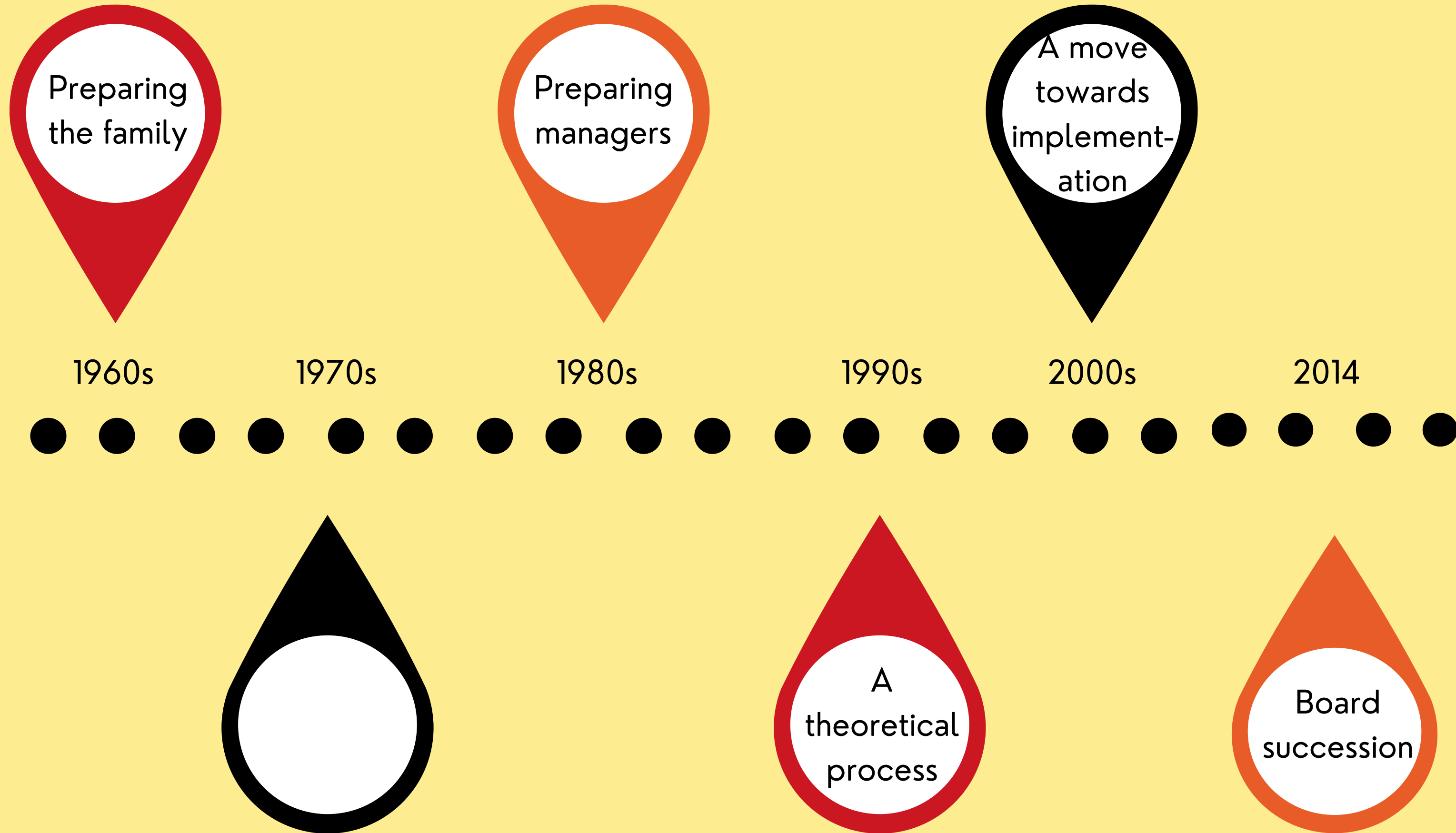
Source: Gartner (2020)

Directors recognize the positive relationship between succession planning and board effectiveness.

32%



A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY



Source: Pauline Brassard, CRHA (2023)

The background of the slide is a composite image. At the top, a sunset sky with a bright sun and clouds is visible. Below the sky, a city skyline with various buildings and a bridge over a river is shown. In the foreground, a large hand is holding a silhouette of a woman in a business suit, who has her hands on her head in a thinking pose. A red line graph with an upward-pointing arrow is overlaid on the scene, starting from the hand and extending towards the top right.

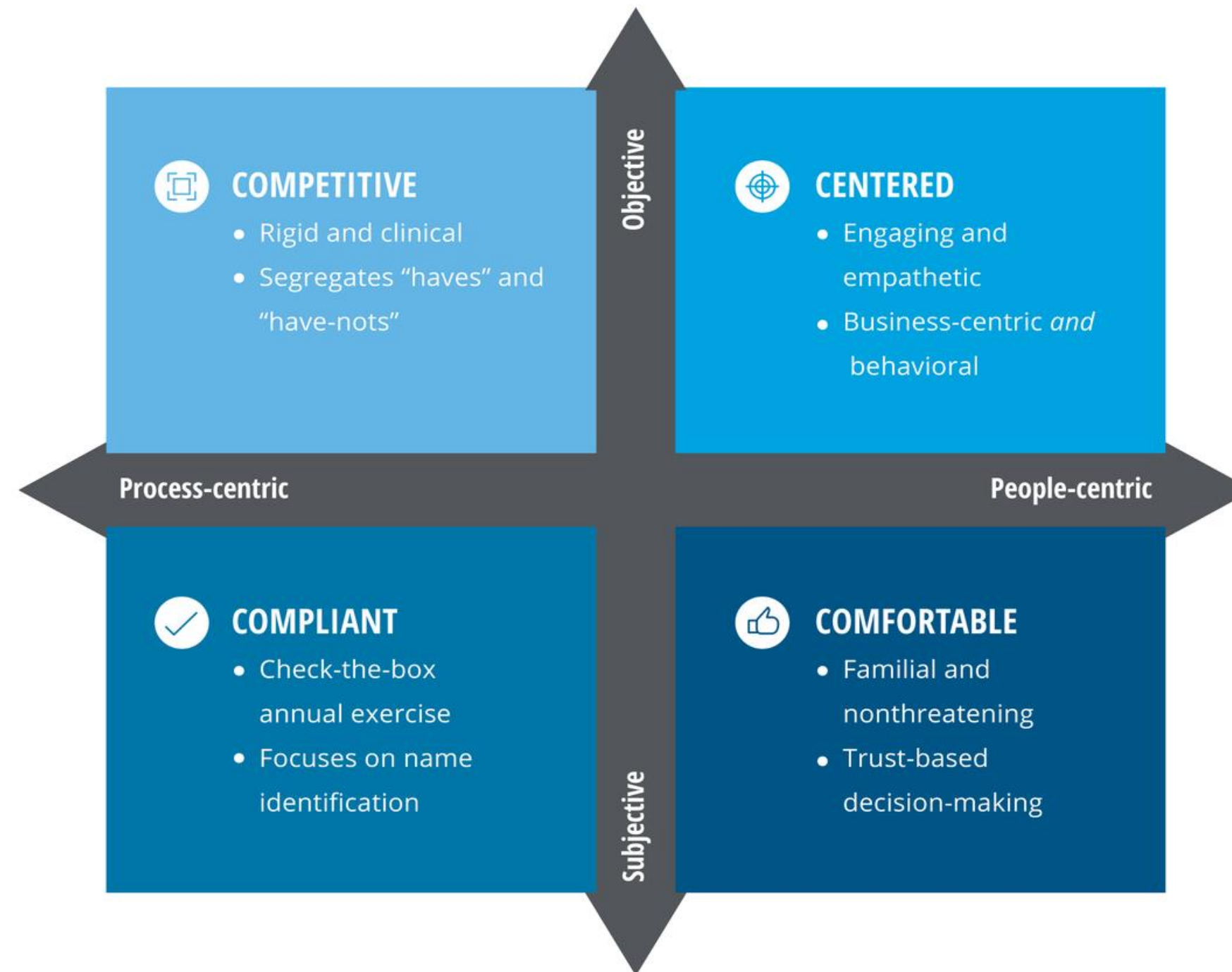
# What is Succession Planning

**Succession Planning is a long-term process used to anticipate both expected and unexpected departures. The process includes identify, recruiting, training and mentoring employees who are high performers or who have leadership potential.**

# Deloitte recommends a **CENTERED** APPROACH

FIGURE 1  
Four approaches to succession planning

WHAT?



Source: Deloitte analysis.

WHAT?

# Steps to Successful Succession Planning

Identify key roles, assess current situation, develop/search for talent, choose successors, and create a timeline. Continuously review and update the plan.



# A Board Policy

# Competencies

WHAT?

What are the needs?  
What positions?  
Who is interested?

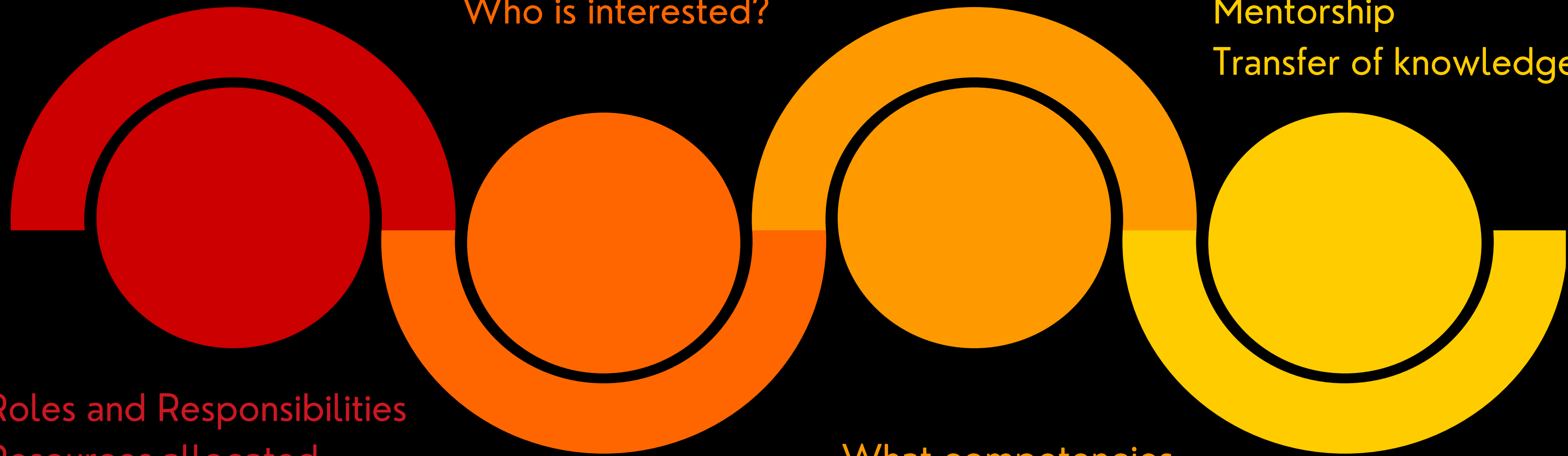
Training  
Competency development  
Mentorship  
Transfer of knowledge

Roles and Responsibilities  
Resources allocated  
Expected outcomes  
Board buy-in

## Diagnosis

What competencies  
are needed?  
Evaluate competencies  
of individuals.

## Plan



# A Board Policy

# Competencies

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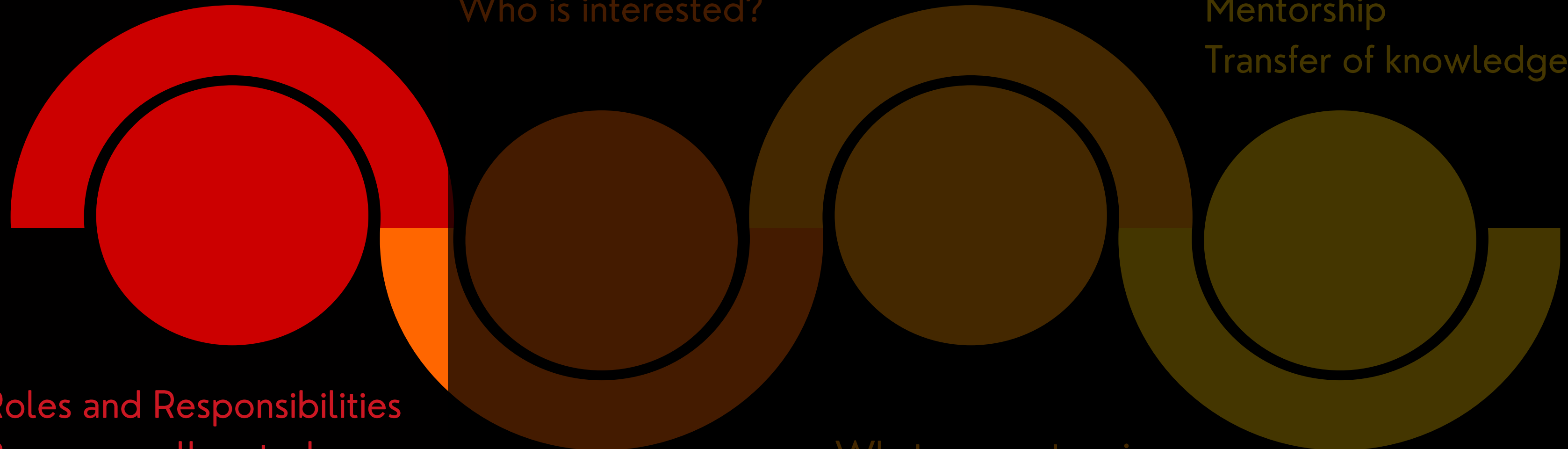
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# Board Policy

## Questions to consider

- Do you have a succession policy?
- What is the Board's policy statement?
- Is it part of the Board's HR policy?
- Who will be responsible for building the succession plan?
- Will the same person or entity be responsible for expected and unexpected succession planning?
- Are there sufficient resources allocated to ensure a successful transition?
- Do you need to hire an external consultant to develop the policy?

WHY?

The policy statement includes the Board's wish to:

ENSURE CONTINUITY IN KEY POSITIONS AND  
ESSENTIAL OPERATIONS

DEVELOP TALENT INTERNALLY AND  
MAINTAIN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

ENCOURAGE PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

FACILITATE TRANSFER OF  
ORGANIZATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

ALIGN STRATEGIC ORIENTATION AND HUMAN  
RESOURCES



# 1. Policy Statement

## 1.1 Objective

This policy is designed and approved by the Organization to ensure that rules and guidelines are in place for all matters regarding the succession planning for board positions, executive, management and all key professional positions within the Organization.

## 1.2 Policy statement

It is the policy of Organization to work towards engaging the most qualified, competent board members to guide the organization. As such, this policy, designed to ensure replacements for key job incumbents in board and executive positions in the Organization, in addition to other key and professional positions. It is the Organization's policy to ensure continuity in key positions and essential operations, develop talent from within the organization internally and encourage professional development and maintain organizational culture.

The Board shall be responsible for implementing this policy and its related procedures.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

### 2.1 The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors must ensure the mission of the Organization is upheld and that the Organization remains sustainable in the event of the departure of any board member or of their sole employee, the Executive Director. The Board is responsible for:

- adopting the succession policy and approving the plans that emerge from it.
- allocating the budgets required for implementing professional development plans for employees wishing to access management positions.
- designating a Committee to develop a succession plan for Board members.
- designing the succession plan for the Executive Director.
- creating a Selection Committee to select a new Executive Director, when the position becomes vacant.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities Continued

### 3.2 The Nominations Committee

A Nominations Committee is a permanent committee of the Board of Directors that meets once each year to review candidacies for vacant Board seats before the annual general meeting. The committee may meet for special meetings when a board seat becomes vacant. The Nominations Committee is composed of two board members, habitually the president and the vice-president, and the Executive Director. Any of these members may be replaced by another board member, by resolution of the Board of Directors. Terms of Reference for the Nominations Committee may be developed to ensure their mandate is well defined.

The Nominations Committee is responsible for:

- Meeting regularly once per year, two months before the annual general meeting.
- Meeting as soon as a board seat becomes vacant unexpectedly.
- Reviewing the Board Member's Competency Checklist regularly to ensure it continues to align with the [Organization]'s needs and strategic orientations.
- Maintaining a bank of qualified candidates to fill vacant board positions.
- Assessing candidates for vacant board positions.
- Conducting interviews with potential candidates, as they see fit.
- Recommending new qualified and competent Board members to the members at an annual general meeting.
- Recommending new qualified and competent Board members to the Board of Directors when board seats become vacant during the year.
- Onboarding new board members, in collaboration with the Executive Director.
- Assigning a mentor to new board members.
- Concluding any business, as occasionally may be mandated by resolution of the Board of Directors.



**How can each  
member of the  
Nominations  
Committee take  
action?**

# A Board Policy

# Competencies

What are the needs?  
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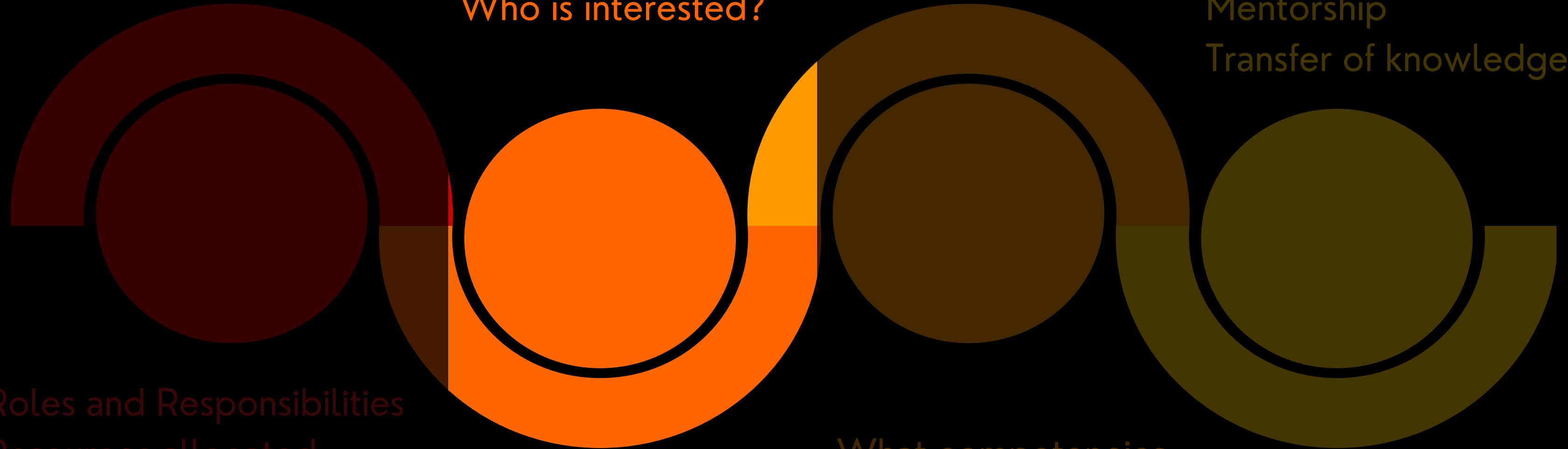
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Resources allocated  
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# Diagnosis

## Questions to consider

- Do you know the current, short-term and long-term needs of your organization?
- Which board positions must be considered within the succession plan?
- Have you assessed your volunteers' and members' aspirations?

# Key Positions:

Impact the mission.

Impact services offered.

Are impacted by the scarcity of volunteers.

Require specific expertise.



# A Board Policy

# Competencies

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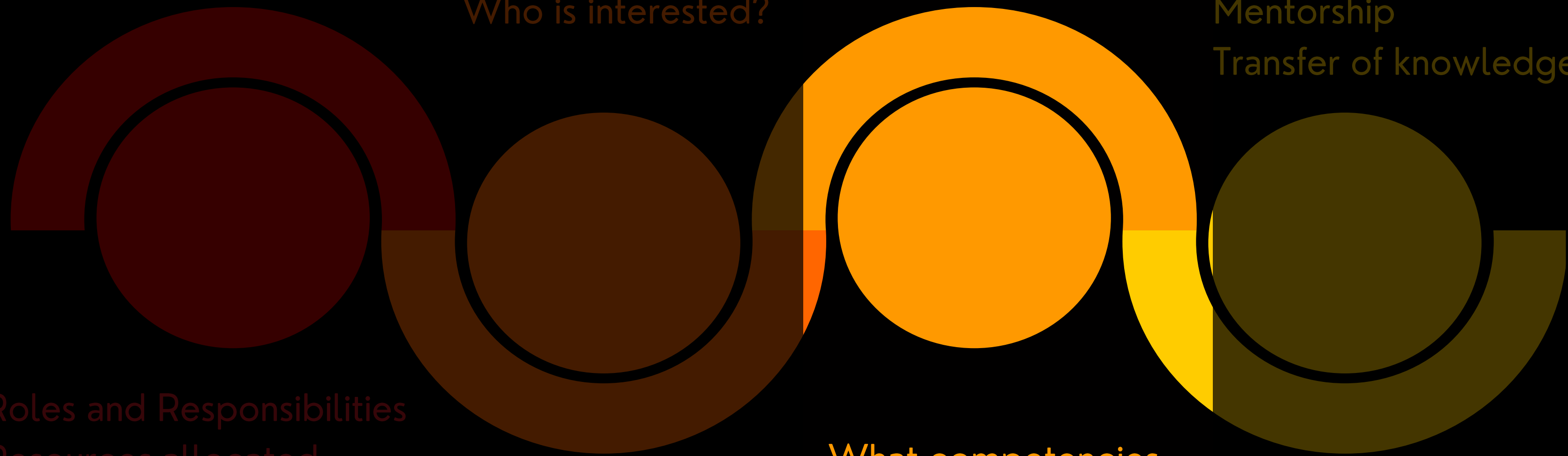
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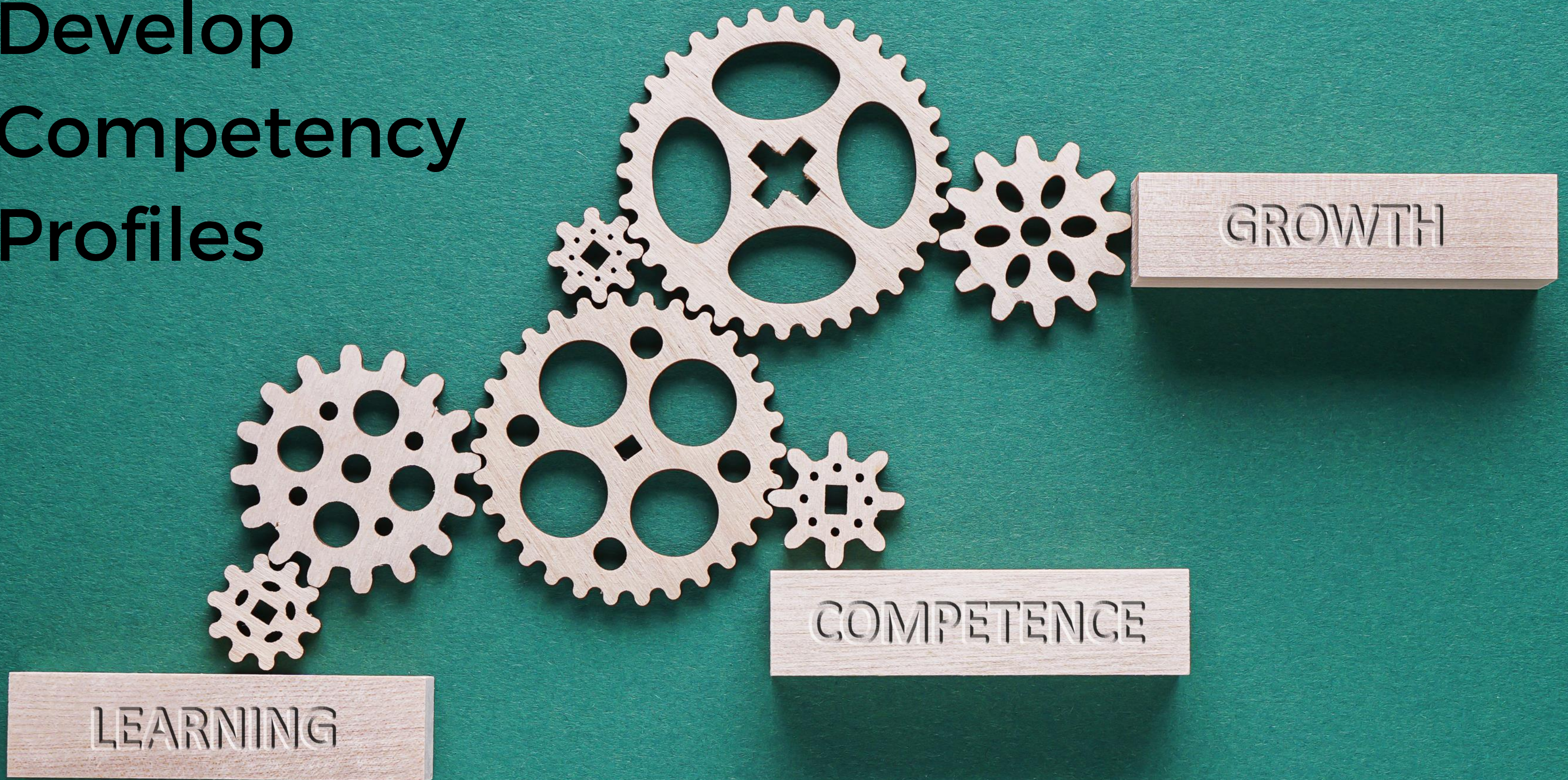
## Plan



## Questions to consider

- Have you identified the competencies needed today and in five years for key roles on your board?
- Are there volunteers or members who have these competencies or whose competencies can be further developed?

# Develop Competency Profiles



# Identify Competencies for Effective Governance

INDUSTRY

TECHNICAL

GOVERNANCE

BEHAVIOURAL

- Legislative framework
- Financial management
- Human resources management
- Knowledge of English-speaking Heritage Organizations
- Network connections

# Directors must also demonstrate..

- Integrity
- Ethics
- Political sense
- Analytical abilities
- Sense of duty and responsibility
- Accountability
- Strategic vision
- Decision-making
- Problem-solving
- Independence of thought

# Board Skills Matrix

Desired/needed skills, experience, attributes	Director Names								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Knowledge of the Heritage Network	X								
Technology/digital media expertise				X	X			X	
Risk management expertise			X			X		X	X
Financial expertise		X	X		X				
Marketing expertise									X
Legal expertise		X							
Human resources expertise			X			X			
Operational expertise	X	X	X			X	X		
Governance expertise		X	X		X			X	X
Gender diversity				X			X		
Racial diversity				X					X
Regulatory expertise	X		X			X	X		
Board tenure (years)	15	15	10	8	7	7	4	1	8
Age (years old)	71	74	65	62	60	67	55	47	58

**Activity**



A photograph of two women standing on a stone path, looking out of a window in a stone building. The woman on the left has blonde hair and is wearing a grey dress. The woman on the right has brown hair and is wearing a white top and a striped skirt. The building is made of rough-hewn stone, and the window is a simple white frame with a crossbar. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting daytime.

**Internal  
Candidates**

**External  
Candidates**



Creating an environment where people want to volunteer is key to recruiting and retaining new volunteers, he said.

That means considering the growing desire for greater flexibility, lingering pandemic trauma and trends around micro-volunteering and inter-generational projects.



2. **Industry Groups:** Partner with industry-specific groups and associations to find potential candidates. These groups often have members who are looking to give back to the community.

**2. Engage with Local Community Leaders:**

1. **Chambers of Commerce:** Engage with local chambers of commerce, as they often have members who are interested in community involvement and leadership opportunities.

2. **Community Centers:** Post opportunities at local community centers and libraries where community-minded individuals may frequent.

**3. Collaborate with Academic Institutions:**

1. **Alumni Associations:** Connect with alumni associations of local colleges and universities. Alumni often seek ways to give back to their communities and maintain a connection with their alma mater.

2. **Business Schools:** Partner with business schools to find individuals interested in nonprofit governance as part of their professional development.

**4. Utilize Volunteer Matching Platforms:**

1. **VolunteerMatch:** Post board member opportunities on platforms like VolunteerMatch, which connect volunteers with nonprofit organizations.

2. **Idealist:** Use Idealist to list board positions and reach individuals passionate about nonprofit work.

**5. Host Information Sessions and Networking Events:**

1. **Open Houses:** Host open house events or information sessions about your organization and the impact of board members. This can attract individuals who are curious and provide them with more information about the commitment.

2. **Networking Events:** Organize networking events or attend existing ones to meet potential candidates in a more casual setting.

**6. Promote Through Social Media and Online Communities:**

1. **Social Media Campaigns:** Run targeted campaigns on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to reach a broader audience.

2. **Online Forums:** Participate in discussions on online forums and community groups related to your cause to identify and engage with potential candidates.

**7. Seek Referrals from Existing Board Members and Supporters:**

1. **Board Member Networks:** Ask current board members to refer individuals from their professional and personal networks who might be interested in joining the board.

2. **Donor Networks:** Reach out to major donors and supporters of your



- 
- **Create a “youth” seat on your board**
  - **Leverage Professional Networks and Associations**
  - **Engage with Local Community Leaders**
  - **Collaborate with Academic Institutions**
  - **Utilize Volunteer Matching Platforms**
  - **Host Information Sessions and Networking Events**
  - **Seek Referrals from Existing Board Members and Supporters (Board members are ambassadors)**
  - **Promote Through Social Media and Online Communities**
  - **Partner with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Programs**
  - **Advertise in Professional and Local Media**
  - **Offer Professional Development Opportunities**

# Create a Database

Position	Person	Initial discussion	Level of Interest	Competencies	Attributes	Timeline/ Commitment
Key Position	Potential successor	Date of initial plan	Date when plan was reviewed	List competencies	List attributes	List when they would be ready and how much time they can spare
President	Name			Governance Grant-writing	Large network	
Director	Name					

Source: <https://carrefourrh.org/outils/fiches-conseils/plan-releve-postes-cles>

# A Board Policy

# Competencies

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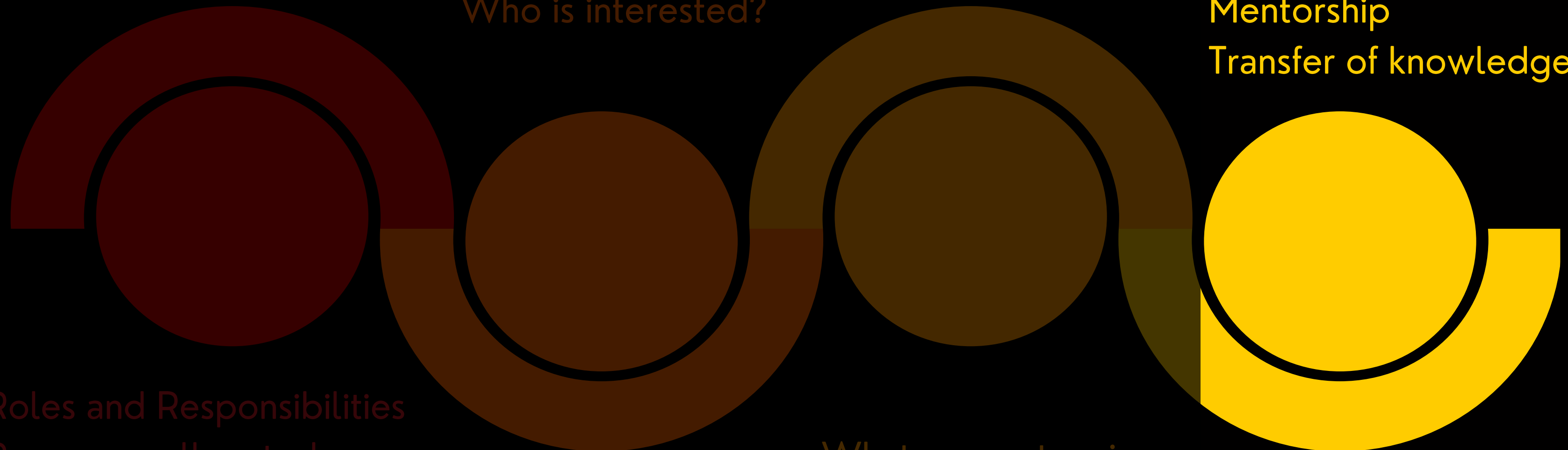
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## Plan



# Develop Plan

## Questions to consider

- Do you have a plan to help volunteers who seek to advance acquire the competencies required to be successful in board positions?
- Do you have a transfer of knowledge plan or an onboarding process to ensure corporate memory is not lost in transition?
- How much time is needed to develop competencies and transfer knowledge?

# Plan to

Train people to bridge the gap.

Pay for education and upskilling, if possible.

Measure progress.

Create a specific transition plan.

Create an objective selection process.



# And also...

Be transparent

Communication regularly throughout the process

Make succession planning part of regular board meetings

# And regardless...

A rigorous selection process is recommended

Being part of a succession process does not guarantee election on the board

# And keep in mind...

An equitable and inclusive process for all

Equitable may mean specific processes for underrepresented groups to have opportunities to develop skills and competencies

Flexibility is key



# What if...

No internal candidates are ready/interested?

The departure is unexpected and we do not have the luxury of time?

# Then..

Go back to the policy:

- The Board's responsibilities include creating a Board Nominations Committee for both planned and unplanned departures.
- Nomination Committee must activate as soon as the departure is announced.

All the other tools developed remain pertinent, but the timelines move up.

# Transfer of Knowledge Plans

Once a successor is named, then implement a transfer of knowledge plan.

Does your board have an onboarding process?

Does the President transfer knowledge before departure?

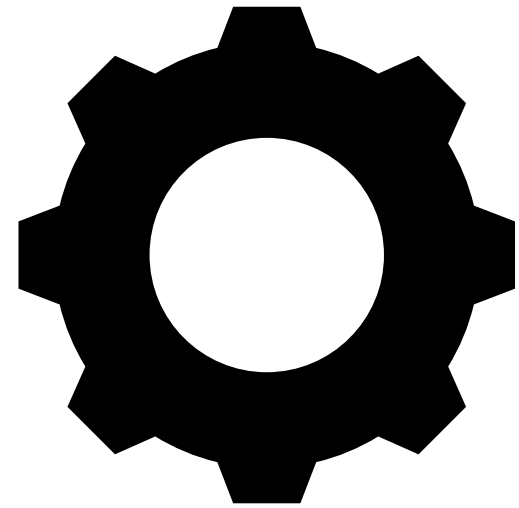
Is there a "Past President" position on your board to preserve corporate knowledge?

Is there a mentorship program in place?

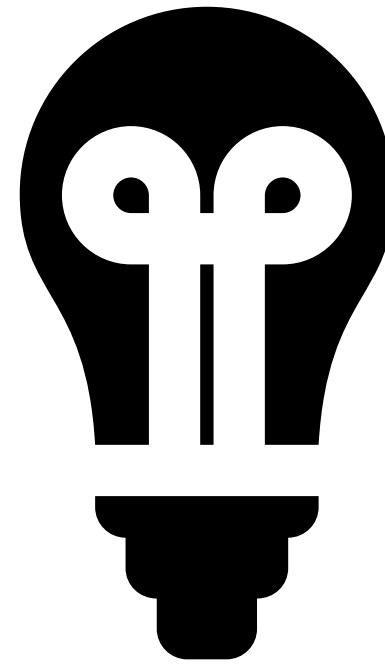
**How do you  
currently onboard  
new directors?**

# To Summarize

Policy



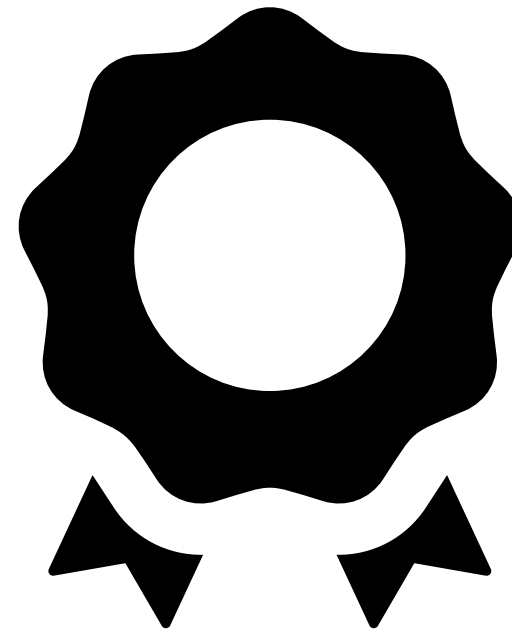
Diagnosis



Plans



Competencies





# Objectives

Learn something new about other board members in the QAHN's Network ✓

Understand the importance of succession planning ✓

Understand the difference between a succession policy, a succession plan and a transfer of knowledge plan ✓

Identify concrete ways to recruit new board members ✓

# Questions and Discussions

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

Many thanks to the Lac Brome Museum Archives

QAHN and the Match Project

Each and every one of you!

(and to chat gpt)

# Resources

<https://carrefourrh.org/ressources/dotation/2012/06/le-plan-de-releve>

<https://carrefourrh.org/outils/fiches-conseils/plan-releve-postes-cles>

[https://www.adma.qc.ca/site/assets/files/4906/plan\\_de\\_releve.pdf](https://www.adma.qc.ca/site/assets/files/4906/plan_de_releve.pdf)

<https://www.bdc.ca/fr/articles-outils/boite-outils-entrepreneur/gabarits-documents-guides-affaires/glossaire/planification-de-la-releve>

<https://www.adma.qc.ca/outils/referentiels-de-competences/referentiel-des-competences-de-ladministrateur/competences-de-ladministrateur/competences-professionnelles/exercer-le-role-demployeur-aupres-de-la-direction-generale/>

[https://www.adma.qc.ca/site/assets/files/5014/adma\\_fichec7\\_gouvernance-fevrier2023.pdf](https://www.adma.qc.ca/site/assets/files/5014/adma_fichec7_gouvernance-fevrier2023.pdf)

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<https://www.lucidchart.com/blog/succession-planning-best-practices#:~:text=Centered%3A%20A%20balanced%20approach%20that%20takes%20into%20consideration,by%20processes%20that%20keep%20the%20selection%20procedure%20objective>

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[https://hr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/2021-03/Succession\\_Planning\\_Step\\_by\\_Step\\_Guide.pdf](https://hr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/2021-03/Succession_Planning_Step_by_Step_Guide.pdf)

[https://www.imbankgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/5f904260d7cd6Extract\\_Succession-Policy\\_Website.pdf](https://www.imbankgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/5f904260d7cd6Extract_Succession-Policy_Website.pdf)

[https://www.suryodaybank.com/assets/pdf/policies/Policy\\_on\\_Succession\\_Planning.pdf](https://www.suryodaybank.com/assets/pdf/policies/Policy_on_Succession_Planning.pdf)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/professional-development/key-leadership-competency-profile.html>

<https://www.oaciq.com/uploads/ckeditor/attachments/1757/competency-profiles-directors.pdf>

<https://www.iod.com/professional-development/director-competency-framework/>

<https://kmtc.ac.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/45.-KMTC-Succession-Planning-Policy.pdf>

<https://chatgpt.com/c/617ac5ea-ab9e-48ef-9cfc-598f1f051b61>