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HELP WANTED: THE COMPLETE GUIDE *to* HIRING A FAMILY FOUNDATION CEO



NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY PHILANTHROPY



Dear Colleagues,

In 2010, the National Center for Family Philanthropy began extensive research into a subject that had never before been deeply explored: the leadership role of a family foundation chief executive. We wanted to fill a critical gap in the field's understanding of the unique circumstances that define this profession.

This guide is one of the outcomes of that work.

Our goal was to take the conversations that CEOs and boards had been having informally for years and bring discipline and research to the discussion. We wanted to provide research-based information to help boards and CEOs navigate this complex partnership.

To gather data, we conducted an in-depth interview study of 60 CEOs (some with the title of executive director or president) plus a sampling of board chairs. We also conducted an online survey of 200 CEOs in conjunction with The Johnson Center for Philanthropy at Grand Valley State University. Those findings helped shape the agenda for a national symposium for an invited group of 75 family foundation CEOs held in Washington, DC, March 23-24, 2011, at the Pew Charitable Trusts conference center. The symposium gave the CEOs a confidential space to talk candidly about the challenges and exhilarations that define their profession.

Several new resources and services for the field have grown out of this research. We've added to the field's literature through a research report and a series of guides. We've also launched an array of in-person educational offerings customized for veteran CEOs, those who are both CEOs and members of the donor family, and for new trustees. And we are using social media to connect more CEOs and board members for virtual discussions on board-CEO partnerships.

One subject we explored in our research was the hiring process. Recruiting and hiring a new CEO who fits the family culture and has the skill set and personality to work effectively with the board are not easy tasks. Boards need to know how to structure a search process, get help if necessary, and make a group decision to select a person who will be working closely with them to achieve their philanthropic goals.

This guide will help you do that. We have tried to make it as practical as possible with case studies, models, and tips that you can begin using right now. We welcome your feedback on how well we've done and what more we can do.

VIRGINIA ESPOSITO

President

National Center for Family Philanthropy



HELP WANTED: THE COMPLETE GUIDE *to* HIRING A FAMILY FOUNDATION CEO

BY SUSAN CRITES PRICE

At some point in the life of most good-sized family foundations, the board will need to hire a chief executive officer. CEOs retire or move on to other jobs or become incapacitated and must be replaced. (For simplicity, CEO is used in this guide to refer to the top paid staff person who may be called executive director, president, or a similar title.) Family members who become overwhelmed with handling the foundation's work as volunteers decide it's time to employ their first CEO. Whatever the reason, transitioning to a new leader is a critically important job for a board.

Much has been written about recruiting and hiring nonprofit chief executives and even some about foundation CEOs. But until now, there hasn't been a manual on how to hire a family foundation CEO. The relationship between a CEO and the family that governs the foundation is unique. It's a partnership that encompasses representing a family in a community, working within a family's culture, and engaging in grantmaking in the context of a family legacy.

Many families faced with hiring a CEO ask the National Center for Family Philanthropy questions such as: Where do we start? What kind of help do we need? Should we use a search firm? What if we have family members who want to apply for the job? How can we tell if the candidate will be a good fit with the trustees? Should we look for someone who already has family foundation experience? The list goes on and on.

This how-to guide will answer those questions and more. It will help you figure out where you want to go as a foundation, find the right person to take you there, and prepare him or her to succeed.

HOW THIS GUIDE IS ORGANIZED

The first section of this guide discusses the broad subject of what makes a family foundation CEO position unique and why and how a foundation should engage in self-reflection before undertaking a search. The second section covers the search process itself: forming a search committee, hiring help for the search, identifying the qualifications and experience you seek, conducting interviews and making a choice. The third section includes a number of special considerations such as hiring family members, dealing with internal candidates, the role of the current CEO in the search, and obtaining interim help.

Section 1

What's so special about a family foundation CEO?

One of the only research projects on family foundation CEOs was conducted by the late Gary A. Tobin, president of the Institute for Jewish and Community Research. His conclusion was that “Few professional roles are more complicated—and less defined—than the family foundation professional.”

Tobin noted that the rapid rise in the number of family foundations was expanding the profession, but that few in the field had formal training, and, unlike other professions where there is a clear career path, CEOs often were hired because of personal relationships or employment in nonprofits related to the family's interests.* They are hired to manage the foundation, but quickly find that they are called on to play many other roles for the family such as advisor, mentor, ambassador, technical expert, visionary, truth teller, confidant, protector, and sometimes, therapist.

*“*Foundation News and Commentary*,” January/February, 2004, available in NCFP's *Family Philanthropy Online Knowledge Center*.

“Few professional roles are more complicated—and less defined—than the family foundation professional.”

“The challenge for the family foundation professional,” he wrote, “is to accomplish the foundation’s important business, but to do so while accommodating the needs of a board made up primarily of family members.”

Tobin identified four levels of involvement that a family foundation professional had to operate in: emotional; intellectual; ethical/moral; and spiritual. Emotionally, the CEO must be able to connect with the family members in a caring way that generates trust while still maintaining boundaries between the professional role and personal relationships. Intellectually, the family relies on the CEO for ideas, options and advice on governance, management and grantmaking. Ethically and morally, the CEO may serve as a moral compass, helping the family sort out right from wrong in its grantmaking and other decisions. As for the spiritual aspect, Tobin noted that giving is a matter of soul and spirit. “Though it can be very difficult for the family foundation professional to communicate on this level...regardless of the subject matter discussed, the spiritual level is a subtext more often than any other.”

“No family or board should start a search process without taking stock.”

—VIRGINIA ESPOSITO, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY PHILANTHROPY

TIP Foundations engaged in reflection prior to hiring a CEO can avail themselves of NCFP’s *Pursuit of Excellence (POE)* diagnostic tool. This first ever assessment designed specifically for family foundations starts with an online survey of board members’ views on the foundation’s current governance and management practices. Then an NCFP – trained POE consultant meets with the board members and CEO to provide an analysis of the feedback and help them develop an action plan to achieve higher levels of effectiveness. For more information, contact Vice President Karen Green, karen@ncfp.org.

START WITH REFLECTION

It’s only natural that when a foundation needs to hire a CEO, the board’s first thoughts turn to who might be a good candidate. But back up. There is an important step that should be undertaken first—a discussion of your foundation’s current culture, challenges, strategies, goals, and vision for the future.

It’s hard to identify the right person to lead your foundation if you don’t know where you are now and where you want to go.

“No family or board should start a search process without taking stock,” said Virginia Esposito, president of the National Center for Family Philanthropy. “Ask how have we developed, how far have we come, and what does that say about where we want to go and who we want to take us there? In some cases, this conversation could result in course correction or an affirmation of general direction but with an eye to the future.”

This discussion could be done within the board or be extended to the broader family, particularly the next generation that will eventually lead the foundation. Seeking input from other stakeholders—for example the current CEO if there is one, other staff, grantees, community leaders, coalition partners—is optional but could be useful.

This discussion can be turned into a written organizational statement that will help you write a job description, prepare you to assess the candidates based on your foundation’s needs, and help potential candidates decide if this is the right job for them. Ask yourselves: “Given the situation and challenges we’ve identified, what skill sets will we need? Can we get that all in one person? If that’s unlikely, how will we handle the “extras?” For example, if you want someone with program expertise, you might not need someone who also has investment savvy when you can use an outside advisor for that function.

Here are some sample questions about the foundation your board might discuss and come to agreement on:

- ▶ What is our foundation’s history and philanthropic legacy/donor intent?
- ▶ What are our values, mission, and vision?
- ▶ What is our grantmaking focus and strategy?
- ▶ What have been our key accomplishments?
- ▶ What issues will the next CEO have to help us deal with (for example, an influx of assets, bringing on the next generation, a change in board chairs, geographic dispersion of the board members)?
- ▶ What are the family dynamics and organizational culture the CEO will need to work with?
- ▶ What are the key challenges for the foundation’s grantmaking, governance, and management?
- ▶ What are the changing realities of the communities we serve?
- ▶ Where would we like to see the foundation go in the future?

WHAT DO YOU REALLY WANT YOUR CEO TO DO?

Another set of questions to explore during the reflection stage is about the role you want the CEO to assume. This is the time to be really honest, because one of the main reasons boards become disenchanted with the person they hire—or CEOs become disenchanted with the foundation—is because the board wasn't clear from the beginning about what it wanted.

Be clear about the level of the position you are filling. Is it really a chief executive or more an executive administrator who will implement the decisions of the board? Boards sometimes want their CEO to filter grant proposals the foundation receives and present the best ones but not make recommendations on the grants presented. Other boards want the CEO to advise them on which proposals to support. It's not uncommon for someone to be hired as an executive administrator and gradually be given more authority—and an executive director title—once a level of trust has been built.

A few foundations confer both management and governance roles on their CEOs by placing them on the board. This can be either a voting or nonvoting position. Having the CEO on the board follows a corporate model, but it also occurs sometimes when a family member who already holds a board seat is hired as the foundation's executive director.

Assessing Your Appetite for Change

One key question is how much change you want. If you are happy with the way things are now, then you don't want to hire a candidate who wants to do an overhaul. Alternatively, if you aren't happy about where you are as a foundation, you'll want someone with the skills to help you turn things around.

Alice Buhl, senior consultant to Lansberg, Gersick and Associates and National Center Senior Fellow, suggested this range of positions you might take regarding your desire for change:

- We know change is important, but we are fairly well satisfied with the way we work currently and would want any change to evolve slowly after we build trust with a new leader.
- We still support our current interests and direction but believe the specific ways we do our grantmaking and programming within that need review.
- Most of us support our current interests and direction, but some of us want to look beyond those in the future.
- Many of us want to have a complete review, which could result in staying with our current programs, but could also take us in new directions.
- Most of us are ready for new directions and particularly want to look at programming that will take into account our scattered geography and the emerging interests of the next generation.
- We want our strategies and direction to be continually updated and reflect the best current learning and experience, so we are willing to support the change that might mean to accomplish our goals.

TIP The Council on Foundations has a publication called “Should CEOs be on the Board?” that can be accessed at www.cof.org.

TIP *Buhl recommends boards “review these roles annually with the CEO who is hired, because they may shift over time.”*

WHO WILL BE THE PUBLIC FACE OF THE FOUNDATION?

One area that causes confusion is the extent to which the board wants its CEO to be the public face of the foundation and how much of the role the family wants to retain for itself. Some families like to be very visible in the community by serving on nonprofit boards, acting as a convener, or playing an advocacy role. Others prefer to remain private and leave the public role to their CEO. For some it’s a joint responsibility that requires regular communication to avoid confusion between the CEO and board or between the foundation and the community.

A Checklist on Roles

Alice Buhl suggests your board think about what it sees as its role and the staff’s role in:

- ✓ Intellectual leadership
- ✓ Developing vision, mission, operating principles, core strategies
- ✓ The grantmaking chain including strategy development, identifying new grantmaking areas and/or new grantees within a focus area, recommending grants (or not), deciding on grants
- ✓ Promoting the foundation and its programs in the community
- ✓ Investments
- ✓ Working with the next generation
- ✓ Identifying new board members
- ✓ Negotiating family differences related to the foundation

“The board should discuss these issues with the final candidates,” Buhl said, so it’s clear what the job will entail.

WHO CAN HELP WITH THE REFLECTION STAGE?

In some cases, it is possible that a board chair with strong facilitation skills could lead this conversation. But most foundations will look to a consultant, someone who can bring objectivity to the process. It might be someone the board has used in the past to help them with their governance issues or a consultant to the family business. There might be a board member or staff person from another family foundation that could help lead such a reflection. But whoever you use should be someone who has experience with issues specific to family foundation governance and leadership. That's because someone with that experience may help your foundation surface priorities that at first blush would not occur to the family.

Search firms will say they provide this as part of their services. They'll help you look at where you are and where you want to go. However, their work will be limited to learning enough about your foundation to prepare a good organization statement and job description.

PLANNING AHEAD

Assessing where your foundation stands now and where you want it to go takes time, so don't delay. If you anticipate your current CEO plans to retire in the next couple of years or you are ready to shift from being an all-volunteer to a staffed foundation, start the reflection stage now. It might take your board a year to work through what the foundation will need in its next leader. That puts you in a better position when you are ready to go through the search process—which can also take several months. If the CEO's departure is more sudden, you may have to compress the reflection stage, but don't skip this step.

“The challenge for the family foundation professional is to accomplish the foundation's important business, but to do so while accommodating the needs of a board made up primarily of family members.”

TIP *If you are also going through a time of transition, due to the death of your donor, an influx of assets or the inclusion of a new generation on the board, for example, consider engaging a family foundation governance consultant to help you work through these issues first before you engage a search firm to help you find a new CEO.*

Section 2

The Search Process

STEP 1

Form a search committee

Unless you already have a candidate identified, such as a family member, you will typically start the hiring process by forming a search committee. (For more on hiring a family member, see page 25.) Some foundations use the board as a committee of the whole. Others designate a smaller number of people who will see the process through. Often, the board chair serves on the committee. You might also consider including the person who is expected to be the next board chair, if there is one identified, since that person will work with the new CEO when the current chair's term expires. Your search consultant can advise you on forming the committee that will work best for your situation.

Anyone asked to serve on a search committee should understand that there is a lot of work involved. "They have to be prepared to commit the time and not simply parachute in and out of the process when it suits them," Karen Wilcox of Isaacson, Miller said.

She also recommends that you pick people for the committee who reflect the diverse views and styles of the board. "Sometimes, boards only want to have the most agreeable people on the committee," Wilcox explained. "But it's useful to have the outliers, both to hear their points of view and because their sometimes controversial perspective is part of the dynamic the candidate will have to deal with."

Search consultant Jane Phillips Donaldson, co-founder of Phillips Oppenheim, also suggested that families pick evenly from among the generations and branches if possible.

Donaldson has found that five to seven people is the most efficient size for a search committee. "It can become a scheduling nightmare with more people than that," she explained.

TIP *One person who should not be on the committee is the current CEO if there is one. Search consultant Karen Wilcox of Isaacson, Miller recalls one search she was involved in where a family member who was serving as the interim CEO was on the search committee "and I would advise against that, too." (The proper role for the incumbent during the search is described on page 23.)*

There should also be an explicit charge for the committee from the outset. Some boards rely on their search committee to pick the finalists or even the final candidate. Others want the full board to be involved in the final interviews. (See page 19 for more on the interview and decision-making process.)

THE BOARD CHAIR'S ROLE IN THE SEARCH

It's the chair's job to make sure a committee is formed and to help guide the process through to its conclusion. Often, the board chair picks the committee members in consultation with the full board. Or, she might ask the third generation family members to recommend someone to represent them on the committee.

She might serve as chair of the search committee, be an ex officio member, or not be on it at all. But as the board's leader, it's her job to make sure the full board is informed and involved as appropriate and to be a key player in the transition with the new CEO. Mary Mountcastle is a family trustee of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, both in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and she has served on three CEO search committees. She recommends that the board chair serve on the committee but not chair it. "There is too much work to do both."

“Sometimes, boards only want to have the most agreeable people on the committee. But it’s useful to have the outliers, both to hear their points of view and because their sometimes controversial perspective is part of the dynamic the candidate will have to deal with.”

—KAREN WILCOX, SEARCH CONSULTANT, ISAACSON, MILLER

TIP *Set up a timetable and put committee meetings on the calendar well in advance so members can plan around them. A national search can take four to six months or more, and a lot of that time is due to the complexity of meshing schedules—both the candidates’ and the committee members. Even simple searches mean a lot of scheduling, so advance planning really helps.*

STEP
2

Hiring professional help

The National Center recommends that in most cases, it's wise to hire professional help when seeking a new CEO. In a few situations, this may not be necessary. If you already have one identified candidate—possibly a family member or a long-time family advisor—you could skip using a search consultant. But you shouldn't skip the other steps recommended in this guide. The person you hire will only be successful if the board has thought through where they want the foundation to go and what the expectations are for the new CEO.

For everybody else, having someone with the expertise and objectivity to lead you through the process is a must. You'll likely be living with this decision for a long time, and you want to get it right from the outset. This is not the time to be penny wise and pound foolish.

“One advantage to hiring outside help is that you expand the possibilities for who your future leader could be.”

TIP *Small foundations that decide to do their own recruiting would still be wise to use an outside person for reference checks. As one consultant put it, “families get excited about who they want to hire and then they don't want to listen to negative references.”*

“If you did the search yourselves, you'd probably end up with someone you already know,” Mountcastle said, thus missing the opportunity for new perspectives, energy and leadership. She also cautioned that advertising, accepting applications, screening candidates, arranging interviews, checking references, and the countless other tasks that are part of a search process are a huge amount of work for a family to take on.

Another advantage is that an outside consultant can get a different perspective on what your foundation needs. “People are much more frank with me than with each other,” said Wilcox. Her information gathering includes individual, confidential talks with the board, the staff, key grantees and various stakeholders for their input on the ideal type of leader for the foundation. With a clear knowledge of the foundation, your consultant is also able to talk frankly with candidates about what the organization is like and get a read on their suitability for that particular position.

“When we interviewed search consultants, we wanted to make sure that was the person we would get and that we would be a priority. And it had to be someone who understood a family foundation and the dynamics of how they work.”

—JULIE FISHER CUMMINGS, MANAGING TRUSTEE
OF THE MAX M. & MARJORIE S. FISHER FOUNDATION

TYPES OF SEARCH CONSULTANTS

One option is to hire a family philanthropy consultant who has helped families with a variety of issues including hiring staff.

That’s what the Hill-Snowdon Foundation did when they hired their first CEO. Karie Brown, a family foundation consultant who had already worked with their board for several years, helped them write the job description, advertised it, screened candidates, checked references and then coached the new CEO and the board through the transition period.

The Russell Family Foundation in Gig Harbor, Washington, hired the consultant who had worked with them earlier when they were moving from a family business to creating a family foundation.

Another route is to use a specialist—a search consultant from either a local or national firm. Get recommendations of an individual within a firm, and interview that person. You have to make sure you feel comfortable with and have confidence in the person you will be working with. If the search consultant will involve other staff members in the firm to help make recruiting calls and conduct preliminary interviews with prospects, ask about who else will be on your team.

On the other hand, if you are considering someone who is in solo practice, make sure they have adequate administrative help if the search is going to be complicated with lots of scheduling and other tasks.

Don’t consider anyone who hasn’t done family foundation searches specifically. Someone who has worked with nonprofits but never worked with a family will not be knowledgeable about the specific issues that affect family foundation boards and CEOs. Alice Buhl was asked by a family who she’d consulted for in the past to review the position description of their CEO opening. The family had hired a search consultant whom they knew, but who hadn’t worked on a family foundation search. “He had covered the programmatic side, but he didn’t think about the need for someone with experience on the family governance side.”

Ideally, try to find someone whose experience with family foundations includes some that are similar to yours, particularly in size.

“When we interviewed search consultants,” said Julie Fisher Cummings, managing trustee of the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, “we wanted to make sure that was the person

we would get and that we would be a priority. And it had to be someone who understood a family foundation and the dynamics of how they work.”

How do you find search consultants? Ask other family foundations that have done searches in the last couple of years who they used. The National Center can provide names of experienced search consultants that other family foundations have used successfully. Regional associations of grantmakers may also be able to help with referrals. If you have used a governance consultant, ask that person, too.

LOCAL VS. NATIONAL SEARCH FIRMS

Mountcastle said the two family foundation boards on which she serves, took opposite approaches with their last searches. The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation grants are restricted to North Carolina, so the board wanted a CEO with strong ties to the state. They hired a local philanthropy consultant “who was not a headhunter but who had done searches,” Mountcastle explained. The consultant worked with the board to help with the job description, advertised it and held initial meetings with promising candidates.

The Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, on the other hand, wanted to conduct a national search and hired a national search firm.

You might consider interviewing both types—national firms and small local firms or sole practitioners. That way you can see what each offers and whether those offerings are cost effective in relation to your needs.

WHAT DO SEARCHES COST?

National firms typically charge a third of the first year’s cash compensation for the CEO with a set minimum. Travel and other expenses such as video conferencing are usually extra, but there is sometimes room for negotiation. It’s standard practice for firms to provide a one-year guarantee. This means that if the candidate you select is fired for incompetence—not just because you didn’t like his style—a firm will reopen the search for you at no additional cost.

It’s wise to take the time to interview at least two to three search professionals to see who will be a good fit with your board. Just as there is chemistry involved in picking the next CEO, that’s also true of the person you’ll be working closely with to help you navigate the search process. “A fast talking, hard charging personality might not fit your family’s culture,” said Alice Buhl.

Charges from local firms vary a lot, as do the services they provide, but they tend to be less expensive than national firms. With local firms, you may have more room to negotiate for just those services you need. For example, if you have a long-time governance consultant who has already helped you work through the reflection stage and write a job description, you may be able to contract for help only with advertising, screening candidates, and reference checking. National firms typically won’t unbundle their package of services. The national firms have advantages over the locals in that their networks of possible candidates are wider. They can reach out to more people who might be good fits for your foundation but who aren’t presently looking for new jobs. This is often where the best candidates come from.

TIP *One thing some boards don’t realize is that there is no cost to interview national firms. They consider this part of the cost of gaining business, and they will travel to meet with you. Just don’t let the head of the company come and make a pitch, then assign a subordinate to you that you may never have met.*

“They often ask me for my opinion, and I share it, but I remind them it isn’t my choice, and I am not expected to live and work with the person over time.”

—KAREN WILCOX, SEARCH CONSULTANT, ISAACSON, MILLER

Ask the consultants you interview for references from family foundations they’ve conducted searches for. Don’t worry about whether the searches were recent. The older ones where the CEO is still employed suggest the search was successful. Whatever you ultimately choose, it’s worth the extra time and effort to have your search committee talk to multiple firms and weigh their services and costs in terms of what you really need.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A SEARCH PROFESSIONAL?

Although all search professionals have their own way of working, here’s a description of what a typical one does:

If you haven’t been through the reflection stage described above, your search professional will probably help you develop some statement about your organization and then help you write the job description based on that statement. She will circulate the description to targeted groups, lists and publications. She will ask you and your current staff, if any, for names of anyone you think might be a good prospect. She also will reach out to people in her own networks to find possible candidates, particularly people who aren’t looking for a new job but might be ideal. The search professional conducts phone or in-person interviews, then presents you with a preliminary list of candidates and helps you pare the list down to a small group of finalists for search committee interviews (the number depends on the search committee’s and the board’s preferences, but is generally 5 to 7).

The search professional also will do extensive reference checks of the finalists. This includes talking to the references the candidate provides plus people the consultant locates independently who have been the person’s boss, subordinate, or peer. At that point, the finalist needs to have notified his current employer that he is being considered for a new position.

Your consultant will help you prepare for interviews, usually sit with you during your initial interviews, and help you weigh the pros and cons of remaining candidates after the final interviews are completed. But many will not tell you who they think you should pick.

“They often ask me for my opinion,” said Karen Wilcox, “and I share it, but I remind them it isn’t my choice, and I am not expected to live and work with the person over time.”

She said boards sometimes go with a different candidate than she would have chosen, “and often enough, they make the right call for the organization.”

STEP
3

Identify the experience and skills you need in a CEO

A foundation is first and foremost a philanthropic organization. A CEO needs to handle an array of management, governance and grantmaking issues that require at least some basic knowledge and skills. The CEO doesn't necessarily need to be an expert on investments or legal requirements or accounting or even the areas of the foundation's grantmaking focus. But that person needs to be a quick study and also be comfortable with seeking outside help and expertise when necessary. CEOs will grow in the job, but the more experience and knowledge of the basic legal, financial and grantmaking requirements of a foundation, the better.

“They told me the job requires diplomacy, poise, a high tolerance for ambiguity, and emotional intelligence.”

PERSONAL QUALITIES TO CONSIDER

Gary Tobin thought there were six essential qualities that family foundation CEOs should possess. He said they should be honest and consistent, candid and frank, grounded in a set of values and beliefs, aligned with the family's beliefs and goals, willing to utilize outside help such as consultants, and be simultaneously engaged and objective. The latter referred to one's ability to navigate ambiguous interactions with the donor family.

Virginia Esposito's interviews with 60 CEOs turned up a similar list. The traits she heard most often about effective CEOs were: calm, clear, consistent, centered and committed. “They told me the job requires diplomacy, poise, a high tolerance for ambiguity, and emotional intelligence. One said his job was ‘building consensus out of complexity.’”

These aren't necessarily traits that will turn up on a resume, but are the kinds of things a board can explore both through reference checks and during the interview process. Some questions can be framed as mini case studies. For example, pick a few tricky situations the CEO will likely have to deal with and ask the candidates how they would handle them. If time and geography allows, you may also want to have the final one or two candidates meet individually with the board chair or even with each board member in a more informal setting so the candidate and board members can get to know each other better on a more personal level. Leah Gary, president and CEO of the William J. and Dorothy K. O'Neill Foundation in

Cleveland, said the traits she acquired in her earlier career as a nurse helped her when she joined the family foundation. “I’m very patient. I had worked with surgeons and others with strong personalities and could figure out how to get things done” in an organization with people of diverse opinions and needs.

One foundation CEO said that when he was hired four years ago, the search committee took a cue from an industrial psychologist on the board and required finalists take a series of psychological tests to gauge how good a fit they’d be with the foundation. He personally enjoyed the experience. But some search consultants try to discourage families from using such tests—which are costly—because they feel the results can be misleading and may be off putting to candidates. They believe that with thorough reference checks, they can get a good read on any emotional/psychological traits that could hamper job performance. If a foundation decides such testing will be required, the candidates should be informed up front rather than when they become finalists.

THINK ABOUT WHAT WORKED, NOT JUST WHAT DIDN’T

Esposito said one of her big concerns with searches is that “sometimes there is an immediate gut instinct to course correct.” Foundations use the CEO transition as an opportunity to hire someone with talents they missed in the previous person, forgetting about what they did have that was good. “You don’t want the pendulum to swing too far,” she cautioned. “For example, you might have someone who is incredibly intellectual who helps the family understand the work, but you wish you had someone who is easier for the family to get along with. So you find someone who is more open and affable. You enjoy them. But then you wonder why you don’t have thoughtfulness, inquiry, inspiration.”

FAMILY FOUNDATION EXPERIENCE NEEDED?

Foundations often weigh whether it’s more important for them to find a person with experience working with a family, such as with a family foundation, family business or family office, versus someone who has expertise in their funding areas or other types of experience and skills. Ideally, you want a combination, but that’s hard to come by. Most CEOs have not run a family foundation before assuming their current position.

Your goal should be to find someone who has the core characteristics you seek—and with whom you feel comfortable and share values—and then give them the time and resources to gain the experience they lack.

Stephen Foster, president and CEO of the Overbrook Foundation in New York City, worked for an independent foundation prior to joining Overbrook so he had grantmaking experience. He said he’s been very lucky at Overbrook that “we have a closely shared system of values.” The strongest value he brought to the job, he said, “is in reminding the directors that they are the board, and ultimately my job is to make them successful.” He said candidates for family foundation jobs need “empathy and a recognition that in seeking this work, they will be involved nearly as much in issues of family as in issues of managing an institution.”

► VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

In 2007, Douglas Bitonti Stewart was approached by the consultant managing the search for the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation in Detroit, Michigan. After spending two years in development and nearly 10 years in a previous role, he had recently taken a leadership position in a university and had no thought of seeking a job. His name surfaced because Julie Fisher Cummings, the foundation's managing trustee, had met him when she was a board member for a nonprofit he had worked for previously. "When I put him in the pool, I didn't advocate for him," Fisher said, but she thought he might be one interesting possibility. Stewart was intrigued, but he gave the consultant and the board "reasons why I wasn't a good candidate. I wasn't an experienced grantmaker, was not Jewish, and was not deeply knowledgeable about early childhood education and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa," funding areas supported by the foundation. "I said to them "if what you are looking for is a person who can help you work together as a family, giving together and focusing on changes in the areas you are passionate about and at the same time creating new shared family legacies and stories, I would love to help with that." Fisher said they weren't seeking someone from the field, but rather someone "who could bring a fresh view of things, who had a high emotional IQ and healthy ego, who could be diplomatic and caring."

► VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

When the Hill-Snowdon Foundation in Washington, DC, hired their first CEO in 2004, they had also embarked on a new grantmaking direction that emphasized social justice funding. They decided it was more important for the executive director to have program expertise than prior family foundation experience. Ultimately, they chose Nat Chioko Williams, a program officer for an independent foundation in New York City. Hill-Snowdon, with an endowment in the \$20+ million range, was small by comparison.

For a 50-year history of the foundation published in 2009, Liz Snowdon, a board member (and current chair) said Williams "was just the best fit with our personalities. We needed someone we'd be comfortable with. We interviewed some people with more experience running family foundations, but he had more knowledge of our funding area. And he was really ready to do a start-up. He was entrepreneurial."

The Interview Process

“The need for complete confidentiality in the search process cannot be over-emphasized.”

You may have internal candidates from the family vying for the position or candidates from your current staff, and all have a personal stake that could complicate the search committee’s work if word spreads about who is being considered. Also, outside candidates may not have told their employers yet that they are interviewing for another job. “It can be disastrous if there is a leak,” said Donaldson. “Foundations have lost some fine candidates because of that.”

The search committee should provide periodic updates to the board and the staff on the process and the progress of the search. This can be an especially stressful time for your staff if you have any, and they will want to at least know an estimated timetable.

The process you use for interviewing varies with the foundation and the recommendation of your search consultant if you are using one. You might, for example, have the search committee review candidates on paper, hear from the search consultant on her preliminary phone interviews, and then narrow the list to a handful of finalists. The finalists—usually 2 to 3—could then be scheduled for personal interviews with the search committee—or sometimes with the whole board. It is important for the whole committee to be present for all the interviews. Search consultants may sit with you through the first rounds of interviews but recommend they not participate in the final round. Some foundations also include their long-time governance consultant in preliminary interviews because that person knows the family well and can provide an additional lens.

Some boards like to have the finalists back more than once and some like to have a formal interview followed by an informal setting such as over dinner to get to know the finalists. Occasionally, candidates are asked to meet with board members individually, but this is sometimes hard to arrange given the time, especially if there is travel involved to other cities where board members live. However, several CEOs interviewed for this guide stressed how valuable it had been for them to meet individually with board members. If possible, they recommended having those meetings in the members’ homes or places of business so you can see them in their regular surroundings.

When the Russell Family Foundation in Gig Harbor, Washington, hired their current CEO, they also met with the two finalists’ spouses. “We felt it was important to get to know the candidate’s spouse or significant other, especially since the job involved them moving to a new state,” recalled Sarah Russell Cavanaugh.

TIP *The place where you conduct interviews is important. To keep the interviews confidential from staff or other interested parties, it’s best to hold them in places other than the foundation’s office.*

“Watch the candidates’ language. If they say ‘I did this’ instead of ‘the last board I worked with was able to accomplish XYZ,’ that’s a red flag.”

“Give the candidates plenty of time to talk about themselves,” Julie Cummings suggested. “The longer you get them to talk, the better the chance of discovering what they are really like. Watch the candidates’ language. If they say ‘I did this’ instead of ‘the last board I worked with was able to accomplish XYZ,’ that’s a red flag. Do they listen when you talk to them? Are they reflecting on that, or do they just go back to what they were saying?”

Some foundations also invite final candidates to meet with staff. This can help the candidate get a better feel for the organization and for the board to get the staff’s reaction. But it isn’t good practice to ask staff to vote on their favorite. They need to be prepared to work with whomever you hire.

SHARING THE FAMILY CULTURE WITH THE CANDIDATES

When there has been a breakdown in hiring the right CEO, it’s often because family involvement and family leadership have not been discussed during the interviews, Esposito said. She recalled one high profile hire where a large foundation chose a strong nonprofit leader who was well-regarded in their city.

“The family was excited about where he could take them. He brought his nonprofit demeanor to the table—he thought ‘I get to run out and make big things happen.’ He didn’t bring up the family’s involvement in the work during his interview, and they didn’t either.” The result, Esposito said, was that he charged ahead with his own agenda and got so far ahead of his board that the relationship ended within a couple of years.

ONE TOPIC THAT IS OFTEN TIPTOED AROUND IS THE FAMILY CULTURE, INCLUDING THE FAMILY DYNAMICS

“The trustees want to put their best foot forward. They don’t want to say ‘our family doesn’t always play well with others,’” Esposito explained. “But they do need to at least talk about the family nature of the organization. It’s a philanthropic enterprise operated by a family—what’s its legacy, its vision, how does the family participate in it, what will the CEO’s role be in relation to that?” It is a mistake, she said, to hire someone solely for their program expertise. “You want the foundation to be successful on all levels so bring governance and family process in to that at the outset.”

Esposito recalled that she once got a call from an acquaintance who was with a corporate foundation and who had decided he didn't like corporate politics. He wanted to run a family foundation and was looking for job leads. "He stressed that he only wanted to work for one that 'didn't have all that family stuff.' I assured him such a family foundation didn't exist."

Kate Wolford, president of the McKnight Foundation in Minneapolis, recalls how unique the McKnight board's posting announcement with the position description was when she decided to seek the CEO position. "Usually descriptions are about leadership attributes, but this one also talked about how the family viewed itself. What I loved about it was the part about their values."

This played out in the interview process as well, Wolford said. Their national search consultant had thoroughly vetted the candidates' experience before presenting them to the search committee so that by the time Wolford, then president of one of the foundation's many grantees, was interviewed, "very few questions were about my skills. More were about my character and style." These subjects were explored even more thoroughly after the group interviews, since Wolford was asked to also meet individually with the board members, including the two nonfamily members. "That was really helpful; it was a mutual discernment process rather than an interview."

"But they do need to at least talk about the family nature of the organization."

► VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

What should boards be looking for when interviewing CEO candidates? Diana Gurieva, chief executive of the Dyson Foundation in Millbrook, NY, has had plenty of time to reflect on this in the 20 years since she was hired as the foundation's first staff person. "People in this job have to be highly intuitive about family dynamics, whether they've got training in it or not." They also have to be comfortable with a high degree of ambiguity. In family foundations, "things are never as cut and dried as they are in nonprofits that aren't operated by families. You have to be flexible in a fluid environment. There are exceptions to every rule. Our grant guidelines say 'Generally, we don't fund...' but there are exceptions if a family member really wants to do it.

"You also need a person who doesn't have a huge ego or who has a healthy sense of their own ego that they can defer to other people." She added that it can be hard for some CEOs to separate themselves from issues of money and power, forgetting that it's not their name but the family's that's on the door.

STEP
5

Making Decisions

TIP *You can get benchmarks for executive director salaries and benefits by asset size in The Council on Foundations' Grantmakers Salary and Benefits Report which is updated regularly (www.cof.org).*

TIP *When all this is done, you'll be entering a new phase: insuring the new CEO has a successful transition, which is just as important as the hiring process. This would be a good time to appoint a transition committee. You'll find more insight into the transition phase in NCFP's companion publication: "The Complete Guide for the New Family Foundation CEO."*

One of a board's key jobs is to hire the CEO, so the board must vote on the final candidate. The board has the option, however, to let the Search Committee do the work of recruiting, vetting, and presenting a final candidate for approval. Or the board might only want the committee to do the preliminary work and let the full board interview and pick among the finalists. Either option works as long as your search committee's charge is clear from the beginning. Some foundations also seek the input of founding board members (such as the donor or spouse) if they are no longer on the board.

The more people involved and the more steps, including rounds of interviews, the longer the hiring process takes. Try not to drag it out too long. Foundations that take many months to decide may lose interested candidates who can't wait forever. And although it's rare, be prepared for the possibility that your preferred finalist, for whatever reason, decides to drop out of the search before the final decision is made.

Deciding on someone isn't the end of your work. You still need to negotiate the terms of employment with your finalist and receive that person's acceptance. You'll also need to prepare an offer letter and have it reviewed by your foundation's legal advisor. It should cover:

- ▶ Term of the contract, e.g. two years, and whether there is a probationary period
- ▶ Duties (this will parallel the job description)
- ▶ Salary and benefits
- ▶ Performance review process (e.g., annual review based on mutually agreed upon performance plan)
- ▶ Cancellation (if either the CEO or the board wants to end the relationship)
- ▶ Indemnification of the CEO
- ▶ Renewal of the contract

You'll also need to work out a plan for announcing the appointment. There are insiders, such as staff, who should hear the news from the board personally. There might be others, such as key grantees or colleagues, who deserve a phone call or an individual e-mail before a press release goes out to the broader community.

Coordinate the timing of the announcement carefully with the person you are hiring. She needs to communicate with her current organization and key stakeholders as well so they aren't caught off guard by the foundation's release of the news.

Section 3

Special Considerations

ROLE OF THE INCUMBENT CEO IN THE SEARCH FOR A NEW ONE

If an outgoing CEO is still working for the foundation while the search is underway, the incumbent's involvement can be positive—or can derail the process. As mentioned earlier, incumbents don't belong on the search committee, but they can be helpful in other ways.

The problem with incumbent CEO involvement is that it's hard for them to be objective. For example, they may think the ideal replacement is someone just like them, who will operate in the same ways and carry on with existing programs and direction. If there are internal candidates from the staff, the CEO may be put in an awkward position if he either

“If an outgoing CEO is still working for the foundation while the search is underway, the incumbent's involvement can be positive—or can derail the process.”

favors—or opposes—having the subordinate promoted. Likewise if one or more family members are interested in the job, the CEO could have competing loyalties.

“Have a conversation with the outgoing CEO about the role he will or won't have,” urged Esposito. It may be hard for a long-tenured CEO to imagine himself replaced by anyone, let alone someone who might be half his age and with very different experience, she explained. He may have the view that the foundation should hire someone from his same mold. “If the family decides to go in a different direction in terms of the kind of leader they

want, they should make clear that it doesn't reflect on the current CEO but rather is a result of the way they see the foundation—and the family—evolving in the future. It might be helpful to let the incumbent know that his leadership has positioned the foundation for this transition.” Search consultants advise against having the incumbent participate in the interviews because that can constrain what the candidates say. A person with ideas for making changes in the foundation's management or governance could feel uncomfortable expressing them in front of the outgoing CEO.

“Sometimes there is huge dependency on the current CEO, and families will defer to them,” Wilcox said, even though it's the family that needs to make the decision and live with it. The old CEO won't have to work with the new one.

There are helpful roles the incumbent can play, however. They can and should be a resource to the search consultant on some of the challenges facing the next CEO. They may have ideas for potential candidates. And they can help the finalists by meeting with them one-on-one to answer questions and offer their perspectives on the foundation.

Wilcox also recommended that foundations not offer the outgoing CEO a place on the board which can create awkwardness for the new hire. An exception might be when a family member has been the foundation's first CEO and now chooses to step aside so an outsider can take over the reins. That was the case with Sarah Russell Cavanaugh who had been the part-time executive director of the Russell Family Foundation, but wanted to step aside to have more time to raise her young children. After the family chose her successor, she rejoined the board. “I was involved in the hiring process, and Richard [Woo, the current CEO] was the right leader to take us forward.”

Some boards have their current CEO remain for a period of time after the new one joins the foundation staff in order to provide an orientation and smooth transition. Several CEOs who were in that position as the new hire said that if this is done, it should only be for a brief period. Otherwise, there can be awkwardness about who is in charge. This kind of overlap also can occur if the current CEO gave the board many months of notice of his retirement date and the new hire is chosen well before that. In that case, rather than have the new person function as a CEO-in-waiting, it might be possible to give the incumbent a new role and title such as senior fellow.

► VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

One former CEO said he helped the family get their process in place to conduct a search for his replacement, but he didn't want to be involved in candidate recruiting or interviewing. When the family pushed him to meet with the final three candidates, he agreed reluctantly but didn't ask the finalists questions. “I just said ‘what do you want to know?’ I felt strongly that I shouldn't be part of the decision.”

Inevitably, the CEO received calls from a number of people who were considering applying for the job and seeking information or advice. He referred the callers to the search committee.

He also gave his board 18 months advance notice of his planned retirement, giving them plenty of time to prepare for a CEO transition. After a nationwide search, the board selected a new CEO and had enough time with the incumbent still on the job to let the new hire provide several months' notice to the organization he was leaving so they could have a smooth transition, too.

HIRING A FAMILY MEMBER

Many families are lucky to have a family member who would do an excellent job of running the foundation. Don't be tempted to just anoint that person and leave them to run things. Your board should still go through the process of assessing where the foundation is currently and where you want it to go in the future. Then, mutually agree on a written job description and a set of performance goals which you can use for periodic assessment of the family member's performance. This protects everyone, the family member and the board, from misunderstandings later and keeps the employment relationship on a professional basis.

On the other hand, you may have a family member—or more than one—who would not be a strong choice to lead the foundation. Too often, for the sake of family harmony, the family is tempted to give the job to the relative regardless of how well (or poorly) qualified. This becomes even more complicated if more than one family member wants the job.

The foundation is a public trust and does not exist to provide employment for family members. Hiring a CEO must be about the needs of the foundation, not the needs of individuals. Keeping the hiring process on a strictly professional basis can avoid problems down the road.

“You need an articulated, well communicated strategy for how those currently involved in the foundation will be treated,” Esposito said. Being clear about the process can be particularly helpful if you have someone in the family or on staff who you don't want to hire.

Donaldson said it isn't recommended to ask a family member to compete against a national pool. She believes the foundation should decide first whether any family members will be considered, and if not, then look outside the family.

The goal is to articulate the qualifications and create an even playing field where candidates' qualifications can be compared against the pre-determined job description. The more agreement you have in advance—and in writing—as to what those qualifications will be, the less personal the process becomes.

“You need an articulated, well communicated strategy for how those currently involved in the foundation will be treated.”

TIP *Sometimes the family member who is interested in the job is on the board. It's a good idea for that person to step off the board when the search begins. If the family member is passed over for someone else, it's best if that person does not return to the board, at least in the short term, to give the new CEO room to develop a relationship with the board without a potentially disappointed rival in the group.*

► VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

The Meadows Foundation in Dallas used a two-tiered approach in 1994. When longtime CEO Curtis Meadows announced his intention to retire so he could pursue other interests, the board hired a local search consultant they knew who had a background working in a family business and in the nonprofit community. They told him to limit the search initially to anyone in the large extended family who was interested in the job and over the age of 21. If no qualified candidate was found from that pool, or if the board couldn't reach a consensus around a family candidate, then the process would expand to nonfamily applicants, but family members could remain in the potential candidate pool if they chose.

The search committee was composed of the nonfamily members on the board so that the screening of family member candidates could be done with more objectivity. The final decision was made at a meeting that included the whole family, not just those on the board. Linda Evans, Curtis Meadows' cousin, was chosen and she is still the foundation's leader.

Evans said that it had always been the board's desire for a family member to serve as president if at all possible. "Uncle Al [Meadows, the founder] put a provision in the trust that he wanted a member of each branch of the family to serve as a trustee on the board for as long as possible because he believed his family could best carry out his interests. He didn't want to leave his family his money because he wanted each of us to have the ambition to be successful in our lives and careers. Instead, he gave us the gift of stewardship of his foundation."

Evans said it was critical for the selection process to be fair and unbiased. The objectivity of both the nonfamily search committee and the search consultant, was one of the most important factors in selecting a leader. "The consultant can be fair to everyone and has the experience to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate. This takes the pressure off of the family. This really helps, for example, if a parent has to pick between two children who both want the job, but one child isn't a good fit at this point in time."

She recommended that a board considering family members vote in secret. "You have to take the emotion out of it. It's incumbent on all board members that the person who is selected have the best interests of the foundation in mind and put aside all their personal biases."

WHEN YOU HAVE INTERNAL CANDIDATES

Foundations with multiple staff may have one or more who are interested in stepping up to the CEO position.

If you are clear that the staffer is not right for the job, don't interview that person just as a courtesy, advised Wilcox. On the other hand, you should not rely solely on the advice of your current CEO. If you haven't worked with the person closely enough to judge their qualifications, give them the benefit of the doubt and the opportunity to make the case.

Victor De Luca, president of the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation in New York City, was a program officer at the foundation for nine years before being promoted to the top job in 2000. The previous president had given the board 18 months' notice of his planned retirement, and they planned to launch a nationwide search. But first they considered internal candidates and De Luca was the only one who applied. After interviewing him, they decided to hire De Luca and end the search.

Even though the board knew De Luca in his program officer role, they didn't know his suitability for "running the organization. I prepared a resume, had an interview with the search

committee and presented myself as a fresh candidate.” The advantage he had over an outsider was that he already had the background on the foundation’s work and a relationship with the staff and board. “Because they understand the program,” De Luca said, “internal candidates can pinpoint the refinements and be more surgical” as they make changes. “Sometimes a new staff person will change everything when all the board wanted was fine tuning.”

“There are a lot of assumptions of internal candidates that they agree with everything that’s going on in the organization,” he added. “Try to create the distance to ask them tough questions about their vision, what could be improved, and what they hope to accomplish.”

IF YOU NEED AN INTERIM CEO

If you want to buy some time to go through a period of reflection and then a deliberate search, you may need to engage an interim to keep the foundation running. Having an interim can also smooth the way for the next CEO “if there is need for a turnaround or time for the board to let go of connections to a beloved founder,” said Tom Adams, president of Transition Guides, who works with nonprofits including family foundations.

Boards have handled this issue of interim CEOs in a variety of ways. Sometimes a family member or a trusted family advisor will step in. If you have other staff, there may be an internal person who can be elevated temporarily. A family office can sometimes detail a staff member to work for the foundation until a new CEO is hired. Some families contract with a philanthropy consulting firm that manages multiple family foundations. A few turn to community foundations that offer back office support to family foundations. Occasionally, a retired CEO of another family foundation will step in and serve.

Before hiring an interim, decide what you want to communicate about whether or not the interim person, if he or she is interested, can become a candidate for the permanent job. Donaldson advises foundations to be cautious about letting interim candidates apply. “Interim generally mean interim. It’s best to pick someone who doesn’t want it permanently.” Complications could arise, for example, when the finalists want to meet with the current CEO and that person is a competitor for the job.

► VIEWS FROM THE FIELD

When the executive director of the R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation in Atlanta left the foundation for a new position, the board decided to make the most of the transition. Instead of rushing into a hiring process to fill the job, they contracted with a local financial services firm to manage their grants process and back office functions. This gave the foundation time to work with a local consultant who helped them develop a legacy statement and video remembrance of the foundation’s deceased donor. According to President David Weitnauer, “The legacy work provided a context for thinking about what kind of foundation they wanted to be. Only then did they move ahead with the search process for new leadership. The legacy statement and video have been very helpful for me since I did not know Mr. Dobbs. You can imagine how important they will be for future generations that serve on this board.”

IF IT'S YOUR FIRST PAID EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR PRESIDENT

A first-time CEO will have additional tasks to perform than one joining an existing foundation office. Those duties could include: developing governance policies with the board (such as term limits and conflict of interest), creating new systems for accounting and grant fulfillment, drafting a budget, finding office space and obtaining furniture and equipment, buying insurance, and possibly hiring an assistant or consultants. Make sure you include those duties in the job description.

If a family member has been doing some of the work as a volunteer and is now going to have a paid position, there should be a written employment agreement addressing salary, benefits, evaluation and other employee-related issues.

CONSIDERING DIVERSITY IN HIRING

The ranks of family foundation CEOs are not known for diversity. Since many are led by family members, the pool of candidates is limited.

But diversity—age, ethnic, racial, gender, religious affiliation and other types—is possible when the family makes a genuine commitment to seek diverse candidates for their pool. Mary Mountcastle believes seeking diversity is one reason having outside help for the search is so critical. “Consultants can help you identify people you would not have known about otherwise.”

Donaldson suggested that you ask the search firms you interview “What is your experience in recruiting diverse candidates?” Those with a track record—and deep networks—are better equipped to provide you with a broad pool based on your priorities.

Wilcox added that families should not expect to attract diverse candidates “if there hasn’t been an expressed commitment to diversity in the activities, values, and current staffing at the foundation. Candidates of color are understandably wary that they might be included in a search process simply as window dressing to show that there was a diverse pool.”

THE ISSUE OF PERPETUITY

Most family foundations are created in perpetuity. But over time, the views of the board may change. More foundations are considering the question of perpetuity and some have decided that they want to end at some point in the future. If your sunset plan is only a few years away, that will factor into the kind of person who will be interested in your CEO job and who would be a good choice to lead the foundation through its final years.

While this will likely limit your applicants, you can still find qualified people who will find your situation an acceptable fit with their career plans as long as you’re frank about your foundation’s limited life. If you plan to exist another five to seven years, you might find candidates who are looking for a position where they can finish their careers.

“If you just want to hire someone to spend down the money in the next two years, it could be harder to recruit a top notch person,” Donaldson said. “Five to 10 years would work better.”

Conclusion

Whether your foundation is hiring its first chief executive, filling an opening left by the departure of your current one, or just preparing for the day when your incumbent retires, there is a lot to think about. Although searches are inevitably a lot of work, remember that this transition in the foundation's life can also be a very exciting time. It gives you an opportunity to reflect on where the foundation is now, where you want to go, and what kind of staff leadership you'll need to get there. We hope this guide helps you through the process.

PEER REVIEWERS: Our thanks go to Bruce Maza, Executive Director, C. E. & S. Foundation, and to Kathleen Odne, Executive Director, Dean & Margaret Leshner Foundation, for serving as peer reviewers for this guide. They also were the co-chairs of the CEO Advisory Committee that launched this research.

RESOURCES

"The Complete Guide for the New Family Foundation CEO," National Center for Family Philanthropy, 2012

National Center for Family Philanthropy's Knowledge Center (www.ncfp.org) has sample job descriptions and hundreds of other resources

"Family Philanthropy's Mad Hatter," by Gary Tobin, Foundation News and Commentary, Jan./Feb. 2004
<http://www.foundationnews.org/CME/article.cfm?ID=2748>

The Nonprofit Leadership Transition and Development Guide by Tom Adams, Jossey-Bass, 2010

HILL-SNOWDON FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

ABOUT THE HILL-SNOWDON FOUNDATION

The mission of the Hill-Snowdon Foundation is to create a fair and just society by directing resources to organizations that work within economically depressed communities to improve the lives of and expand the opportunities for youth and their families by promoting education, leadership, and social responsibility.

The Hill-Snowdon Foundation (HSF) was founded in 1957. Following rapid growth of its assets in the mid-1990s, HSF decided to partner with Tides Foundation to provide administrative and programmatic services. After working with Tides for five years, HSF has decided to hire its own staff and open an office in Washington, DC.

The Foundation supports two primary issues: youth organizing and economic justice. In the youth organizing arena, HSF is an established funder with a clear movement-building strategy. HSF is newer to the field of economic justice; it is engaged in exploratory funding and research to determine its strategy and focus. Grants are made in four regions: Washington DC, New York City, California, and the Southeast (US). The Foundation has an asset base of \$31 million and will grant more than \$1.5 million in 2004. It is anticipated that annual grantmaking will exceed \$2 million by 2007.

POSITION SUMMARY

The executive director will be responsible for managing HSF and its grantmaking activities in accordance with its mission. At first, the executive director will set up the Foundation's office and hire initial staff. Over time, the executive director will be responsible for developing and refining appropriate operating, financial, and grantmaking procedures. The executive director will oversee both economic justice and youth organizing funding and will be responsible for implementing program activities in one of these areas. Working with a small board of directors comprised of experienced family members, the executive director will help HSF fulfill its mission, stay abreast of emerging trends in philanthropy, and ensure that HSF has sound operations.

The board anticipates the HSF office will initially have a part-time administrative assistant and a program consultant. Over time, as the budget permits, the Foundation will add a program officer to manage one of the aforementioned program areas. The executive director will report to the board.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The executive director will be responsible for leading the Foundation, building on the momentum HSF has developed in the field of youth organizing and crafting a high-impact strategy in economic justice. The executive director will build strong peer relations and a clear identity for the Foundation, work proactively to engage the board, oversee program development and administration, and manage day-to-day operations in an effective and efficient manner. Specific responsibilities include:

Institutional Leadership

1. *Partner Relations.* Developing strong, collaborative working relationships with grantees, peer funders, and philanthropic and nonprofit leaders.
2. *Board Relations.* Developing strong, positive relationships with board members. Working proactively and collaboratively with the board to further HSF's mission and impact.
3. *Communications/Outreach.* Building the profile of the Foundation in support of its strategies and programs. Developing appropriate materials, such as a website, brochures and/or annual reports.

Program Development

1. *Strategy.* Refining HSF's strategy and furthering its leadership in the field of youth organizing. In the area of economic justice, developing expertise and focus and building a sound and innovative grantmaking program.
2. *Program Administration.* Further developing and implementing grantmaking guidelines and procedures. Overseeing and carrying out programmatic duties such as: requests for proposals, site visits, proposal intake, proposal review and docket presentations.

Administration/Management

1. *Operations/Administration.* Developing appropriate systems and procedures to coordinate communication, documentation, accounting and grant fulfillment (including both program and discretionary grants). Obtaining office space, furniture, and equipment.
2. *Budgeting and Planning.* Establishing, for board approval, annual budgets and grant payout schedules; monitoring expenditures.
3. *Staff Supervision.* Hiring, supervising and supporting staff and consultants.

QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will be someone who is a creative, passionate grantmaker committed to social and economic justice. He or she will be a reflective thinker, a seasoned manager, and an excellent relationship builder. Specific qualifications include:

1. A minimum of five years experience in philanthropy, including developing, planning and executing grantmaking strategies, plans and programs. Significant grantmaking experience in the areas of economic justice and/or youth organizing is strongly preferred.
2. A minimum of three years experience, in addition to the above foundation experience, working for nonprofit organizations.
3. A demonstrated commitment to the social change philosophy of the Foundation and the values of justice and equity that guide it.
4. Excellent management and relationship building skills with a proactive but responsive work style and an ability to represent HSF in the philanthropic and nonprofit communities.
5. A strong administrator who is attentive to detail and skilled at developing administrative systems. Experience starting and running an organization or program is preferred.
6. A keen analytical ability that can be applied to HSF's operations and finances as well as to the review and assessment of potential and existing grantees.
7. Experience working in a diverse, multi-cultural and team-oriented environment.
8. A willingness to relocate to Washington DC, if not already residing there.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Hill-Snowdon Foundation is an equal opportunity employer and, as such, strongly encourages applications from women, people of color, and members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender communities.

Interested applicants should send a resume and cover letter (preferably via email) to:

Karie Brown, Foundation Consultant
Hill-Snowdon Foundation
3145 Geary Blvd, PMB 335
San Francisco, CA 94118
jobsearch@hillsnowdon.org



PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Nathan Cummings Foundation is an intergenerational family foundation whose work is informed by the contributions of family, independent trustees and staff of diverse backgrounds. The Foundation is rooted in the Jewish tradition and committed to democratic values including fairness, diversity and community. We seek to build a socially and economically just society that values and protects the ecological balance for future generations; promotes human health care; and fosters arts and culture that enriches communities.

The Nathan Cummings Foundation (NCF), located in New York City, is a national grantmaking organization with assets of approximately \$420 million, an annual grants budget of about \$22 million and a staff of 23. NCF, which has given away more than \$220 million in the past 20 years, has established a track record as a leader and innovator in the philanthropic community. It makes grants in the areas of Arts and Culture, Ecological Innovation and Contemplative Practice, Health, and Jewish Life and Values, as well as in Collaborative Initiatives for Social and Economic Justice. The Foundation has developed a highly recognized Shareholder Activism Program.

While the Foundation has a special commitment to Jewish life, NCF is a place where collaboration among people of diverse religions, races and ages is effectively fostered. In addition, the Foundation's approach to grantmaking recognizes several basic themes throughout all its programs: concern for the poor, disadvantaged and underserved; attention to the welfare of future generations; promotion of understanding across cultures; empowerment of communities in need; leadership development; and education. Its grants are innovative, addressing important questions of public policy and social change. Program Directors often confer with experts in the field and potential grantees.

The Foundation has an active and deeply committed Board of family and independent members and an engaged group of family Associates. As a family foundation, the Board of Trustees and other members of the Cummings family actively participate in the affairs of the Foundation. The Foundation's program directors are encouraged to collaborate with each other, and, as a result, creative grantmaking has often occurred at the intersection of their respective areas.

The Foundation's culture combines professionalism and efficiency on the one hand, with informality and mutual support on the other. NCF encourages individual growth among staff members and has created an open and human environment with a workspace that encourages creativity. The conference room is frequently the site of meetings and gatherings convened by the Foundation and by other nonprofits.

BASIC FUNCTION AND FIRST YEAR'S PRIORITIES

Reporting to the Chair and the Board of Trustees, the President will be a visionary thought leader and strategist who will manage and provide direction for the Foundation's overall operations and activities. The President will manage a dedicated and creative program and administrative staff, reviewing and facilitating the excellence and quality of existing programs, identifying new program initiatives in concert with the staff and Board, and implementing policies, procedures, goals and objectives as established by the Board. The President will also serve as a spokesperson and public face of NCF, representing the Foundation's mission and purpose externally and with colleagues and decision makers in the field.



Specifically, the President will oversee grantmaking programs, office administration, financial accounting and reporting, legal compliance, and community relations, and will translate Board objectives into specific plans for achievement. In consultation with the Board, the President will make policy recommendations and develop short-term and long-range targets and strategies. The President will find ways to balance the engagement of the family and the Board with the substance and activities of the Foundation, respecting differences and engaging the interests and talents of the coming generations and family members not on the Board, while fostering a high level of dialog, partnership, education and intellectual rigor.

Working closely with the Board and with staff, the President will ensure that NCF fulfills its mission while continuing its thrust as a family foundation dedicated to collaboration and accessibility. An important key to success for the President is an understanding that relationships with the Board and staff are collaborative, based on mutual understanding, communication, respect and trust. **Key priorities during the first 12 months include:**

- ▶ Thoroughly understanding the Cummings family, its history and its commitment to philanthropy; being able to develop and nurture the personal and collegial relationships that must flourish among the family branches, as well as among the family, Board, staff and President, so that all work together to advance the work of the Foundation;
- ▶ Quickly gaining a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the Foundation's mission, culture, purpose, programs, intellectual capital embodied in the senior staff and focus, and ensuring a sound and smooth transition of leadership;
- ▶ While maintaining current programs, reviewing and assessing the scope and range of NCF's programs, grantmaking and activities, working closely with the Program Directors and Education Team Leaders, as appropriate; with the Board, developing a mechanism to formulate a strategic plan that includes cogent analysis and a direction and vision for the advancement of the Foundation and its work moving forward;
- ▶ Knowing NCF's Board, governance structure and policies; invigorating the Board and helping Trustees, Associates and family members to understand the value of working in partnership to achieve NCF's mission inside and outside of the NCF board room; building a solid and thoughtful relationship with each stakeholder, bonding with them, cultivating their interests, encouraging their participation and, with others, mentoring them; continuing to support the engagement and enrich the experience of the fourth generation of family members and, with staff, help them to strengthen their ties to grantees and leaders in the fields that are funded;
- ▶ Establishing solid relationships with the staff throughout the Foundation and working closely with them to foster cohesiveness and support and enhance their abilities; ensuring a level of transparency, communications and information among staff; establishing the parameters of staff responsibilities and authority; setting the tone for the substance, pace and quality of work; making certain that the work of the Foundation reflects its values and mission;
- ▶ Meeting with the Program Directors to understand and master the content, priorities and impact of NCF's major grantmaking programs including the issues and concerns in each; formulating a critical perspective on emerging directions in philanthropy so that the Foundation can continue as an outstanding example of excellence and effectiveness in its individual areas of expertise;
- ▶ With staff, evaluating program strategies and assessing effectiveness and impact for Board review; continuing to increase the Shareholder Activism Program; aggressively pursuing opportunities for collaborative grantmaking with other foundations in the U.S. and abroad;
- ▶ Being recognized as an intellectual leader of the Foundation internally and externally; connecting to the larger philanthropic community including policy makers, issue-focused groups, activist shareholders and peers across the country and across cultures; building new networks and developing access to a broad range of relevant voices in order to represent NCF in a meaningful way;
- ▶ Along with the Executive Vice President, understanding and reviewing NCF's administrative and management systems, internal policies, and procedures; making and implementing recommendations for their continued enhancement;
- ▶ Find ways to upgrade and redesign NCF's website so that it is a portal for information to grantees and other grantmakers; continue to foster the use of all forms of electronic communication including distribution of Board books and grants dockets; continue to explore the possibility of online grants applications.



OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

The President will also:

Leadership/Vision

- ▶ Provide vision and leadership that enables the Foundation and the Board to move dynamically into its next decade, while preserving the Foundation's philanthropic mission and distinctive organizational culture characterized by diversity, maximum participation, creativity, strategic risk-tasking, compassion, intellectual stimulation, humor and a sense of family;
- ▶ Encourage the involvement and commitment to philanthropy of all family members involved in the Foundation and likely to be involved in the Foundation in the decades ahead; beyond Board meetings and retreats, try to ensure greater integration of all stakeholders into the activities of the Foundation, respecting the time that they can realistically commit;
- ▶ Working together with the Board and family, ensure that the Foundation is making a significant impact on society through grantmaking, public leadership, innovation and communication in an age where digital media and social media are transforming how communications occur; implement the Foundation's goals of serving the underserved, respecting diversity and facilitating the empowerment of those in need.

Program

- ▶ Continue to build the Shareholder Activism Program and enhance accomplishments in Ecological Innovation, Arts and Culture, Jewish Life and Values, and Health; ensure that Education Team meetings are learning experiences and serve to excite, inform, educate and engage the Board, Associates and others;
- ▶ Develop an understanding of the significant issues in each of the core program areas of the Foundation; with the Program Directors, take a leadership role in the development of Foundation programs, working collegially with Education Teams and program staff; initiate special projects, as appropriate, to further the Foundation's objectives;
- ▶ Serve as a resource and leader for program staff, encouraging their efforts, supporting their leadership in their fields, developing their capacity for strategic grantmaking, encouraging collaboration with their colleagues internally and externally, and integrating their work with Foundation-wide themes and programmatic efforts;
- ▶ Work comfortably with diverse philanthropic approaches including strategic and proactive grantmaking, collaborative efforts, Board-recommended grants, capacity building, and others; explore new intellectual frameworks and innovative ways of addressing issues, cutting across traditional boundaries of thought and action; monitor key trends and issues in society, particularly those impacting the program interests of the Foundation; communicate implications to the Board and staff, together with recommended action;
- ▶ Establish relationships with key constituencies; work collaboratively with other institutions relevant to the Foundation's purpose; help to strengthen philanthropy and the nonprofit sector in America.

Administration and Management

- ▶ Create a standards and evaluation mechanism to assess the Foundation as a whole with accountability instilled at all levels of Board, staff and activities;
- ▶ Lead, coordinate and guide the work of the staff of the Foundation, particularly supporting the senior program and administrative staff; fine tune the dynamics between Board and staff that does not pull staff away from their primary focus; at the same time, nurture the continued growth of the Foundation's collaborative working relationship among Board and staff; support the development and skills enhancement of all staff; ensure collaboration and cross-departmental fertilization at all levels;
- ▶ With the EVP and senior administrators, continually assess and improve the efficiency of management systems and policies, both financial and programmatic, ensuring a level of fairness, transparency, communication and good process at all levels;
- ▶ Monitor the work of the outside investment managers;
- ▶ Oversee compliance with local, state and federal requirements, assuring that the Foundation maintains its tax-exempt status and good standing as a charitable organization.



Governance and Board Relations

- Serve as a voting member of the Board and the Executive Committee;
- Listen to the Board to better understand their goals/needs and values, and work together to build the next phase of NCF; challenge and provide learning experiences that prepare Associates to advance and become Trustees; at the same time, ensure through the nominating committee that outstanding independent trustees are recruited who will provide intellectual capital to the Foundation Board and staff; pursue the objectives that have been established by the Board and staff; and, over time, develop new responses to opportunities and challenges that arise;
- Make recommendations to the Board regarding the direction of the Foundation's programs and operating policies and grants; keep the Board advised of the activities and financial position of the Foundation; provide the Board sufficient and high-quality information for making sound policy decisions; act as a liaison between staff and Board;
- Working with the Chair and others, structure meetings, committees and retreats of the Board in accordance with the bylaws of the Foundation, supporting an open and participatory process, with a streamlined and prioritized agenda and encouraging the active involvement and leadership of family and independent Trustees and Associates; explore the length, scope and content of meetings, education days and retreats to ensure that they provide maximum benefit and substance for participants;
- Helping Trustees and Associates to become involved in activities important to the Foundation beyond the Board room, providing opportunities, education, speakers, site visits, access to policy makers outside Foundation meetings and the like;
- Partnering with the Board, ensure the implementation of the vision and policies of the Board; together with the board, develop and monitor standards of performance and principles for the conduct of the Foundation's work and participation in the Foundation's activities; develop and implement benchmarks for assessing effectiveness of all Foundation activities.

Communications and Public Relations

- Manage the Foundation's communications efforts, assuring a high level of public visibility for the program aims of the Foundation by effective speaking and writing; support the public work of Board members and program staff;
- Determine how best to use new media/social networking and other forms of cutting-edge and digital technology to enhance NCF's work; continue to find most cost-effective ways to videoconference via Skype and save time and travel expenses;
- Evaluate whether NCF might decide to engage in a greater level of communication/opinion formulation as related to its programmatic initiatives.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

The President should have the following experience and qualifications:

- Demonstrated commitment to public or community service; an understanding of and enthusiasm for the Foundation's mission and grantmaking activities;
- Proven ability to strategically lead and manage an organization or an entity of a scale, function, complexity and governance structure similar to that of NCF; demonstrated experience as a thoughtful risk taker with a record of converting vision into working programs;
- Proven capacity to be conversant in several of the Foundation's program areas, relate to individuals of academic, professional and community accomplishment, and grasp the changing realities and opportunities of the world we live in;
- Recognition as a thought and intellectual leader who has the maturity and experience to work with a family of diverse personalities, experiences and expectations, and the wisdom to balance the depth of a highly professional staff with the desire and willingness of the family to participate in the Foundation's activities;
- Experience in and/or significant understanding of public policy, nonprofit institutions, and developments and challenges in philanthropy – coupled with a passion for social justice and the communities served by NCF; a mix of experiences in several professional settings would be preferable;
- The ability to communicate effectively and openly, both verbally and in writing, with a broad range of individuals and organizations; knowledge of new media and how technology is used to advance an organization and its work; capable of public leadership and vision as a foundation representative.



PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Ideally, the individual should have the following:

- ▶ A sense of respect for NCF and its history, mission and family; an appreciation for the Foundation's philosophy and values and for the importance of the Foundation and its work to all family members;
- ▶ An ability to build consensus; good listening skills; sensitivity to the interests of the Cummings family; an understanding of the responsibilities of their engagement with the Foundation and in philanthropy, and a willingness to educate and engage them in the Foundation's activities;
- ▶ A comfort level with the Jewish heritage of the Foundation, respect for Jewish culture and traditions, and an appreciation for the importance of these issues to the family and the Foundation;
- ▶ Respect for the importance of diversity, coupled with a proven capacity to lead and work in contexts of diversity in many forms;
- ▶ A genuine commitment to social justice – personally and professionally;
- ▶ An ability to think broadly, critically, and conceptually; intellectual curiosity, with an openness to new ideas from all quarters; creative thinking with good strategic sense and an ability to engage others and influence outcomes; appropriate ego needs;
- ▶ The self-confident management style needed to work with a dedicated family, lead strong and competent professionals, and oversee sophisticated programs and systems; interpersonal skills that embody collaboration and a team-oriented approach; an appreciation and respect for contributions at all levels within an organization; an ability to mentor but not micromanage;
- ▶ An ability both to educate and to learn; enthusiasm for promoting the work of the Foundation and addressing its critical issues to ensure overall organizational well-being;
- ▶ A caring and compassionate personality, with a commitment to developing and promoting innovative, holistic and integrative approaches to the Foundation's areas of interest; ability to inspire, motivate and guide others;
- ▶ Patience, humor and a knack for working with an involved and dedicated family and staff of diverse personalities and interests.

Nominations and contact information should be sent to:
NCF@PhillipsOppenheim.com

*For additional information on the Nathan Cummings Foundation, please visit
<http://www.nathancummings.org/>.*

The Nathan Cummings Foundation
March 2011





LEADERSHIP PROFILE

R. HOWARD DOBBS, JR.
Foundation, Inc.

President
R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation, Inc.

THE CLIENT

The R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation is a private charitable foundation established by Mr. Dobbs in 1959. Assets will grow to approximately \$80 million when Mr. Dobbs' estate becomes final this year. The foundation supports a variety of initiatives in Atlanta and in communities throughout the southeast, including programs that support education, health and human services, the environment and community improvement. The mission of the foundation is to:

Improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities by supporting educational opportunities, improving access to health services and promoting environmental stewardship. The Foundation is committed to honoring the life and impact of R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. through its grantmaking activities.

Mr. Dobbs was born in Atlanta in 1906. After graduation from Emory University, he followed in his father's footsteps and established a long, successful career with the Life Insurance Company of Georgia, working his way up from the clerical department to Treasurer and then President and Chief Executive Officer. The company was a unique family-centered enterprise operating with high professional standards, and Mr. Dobbs transformed the company into an industry-wide model of success. Early in his presidency, he instituted a "committee style" decision-making process, quite innovative in its day, where no one individual could make a decision without the consensus of a team of leaders. He believed that institutions could be more strategic and successful if a seasoned team of professionals weighed in on major decisions. This philosophy continues to be important to the trustees of the Dobbs' Foundation.

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President
R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation, Inc.
January 2007
Page 2 of 5

Mr. Dobbs' dedication to business was complemented by his deep commitment to Atlanta. As president of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, he was a key proponent for the city's economic development. An active community leader, he served as chair of the Atlanta Rotary Club, the Fulton County Board of Health, The Metro Atlanta Chapter of the American Red Cross and the Arthritis Foundation. He also maintained a lifelong commitment to education, serving on the Board of Trustees of Emory University, Young Harris College, Agnes Scott College and Woodward Academy. Much of his leisure time was spent yachting and he had a lifelong love of nature, particularly enjoying spending time in north Georgia at Tate Mountain. Additionally, he was an active member at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church.

Mr. Dobbs died in 2003 at the age of 97. At the time of his death, the Foundation's trustees included his nephew E. Cody Laird, Jr. and two nieces, Dorothy Laird Williams and Nancy Laird Crosswell. Mr. Dobbs also had fifteen great nephews and nieces and their children, whom he hoped would some day be inspired by his example and become civic leaders, bringing about real and lasting change in the greater community. Through the work of his Foundation, Mr. Dobbs wanted to offer future generations the opportunity to continue to serve the community and leave a philanthropic legacy.

In the last few years of Mr. Dobbs' life, Mr. Laird worked with his uncle to develop giving guidelines for the foundation, which Mr. Dobbs gave his blessing to, believing that they would help to "guide, not bind" future foundation decision makers. His story is best told by the way he lived his life – with honesty, integrity, perseverance and generosity of spirit. These values represent the legacy that Mr. Dobbs wished to share with those who follow in his footsteps. Through the ongoing good work of the R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation, his legacy will continue to grow and prosper.

Further information is available on the R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation's website at www.dobbsfoundation.org.

THE OPPORTUNITY

In recent months, the R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation has spent significant effort to thoughtfully develop a statement of Mr. Dobbs' legacy and to determine the guiding principles and code of conduct by which the trustees will operate going forward. With this important work in place, the foundation is beginning to formalize its procedures and operations as it becomes a fully professional philanthropic organization.

Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the President will work closely with the Chairman to lead the foundation during this period of transition from the

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President
R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation, Inc.
January 2007
Page 3 of 5

original donor and his nephew and nieces to the next era of leadership. Four mandates are of particular importance to the trustees during this time:

- Establish an efficient and effective infrastructure that enables seamless execution of grantmaking functions and heightens professionalism of the foundation's operations.
- Develop a succession plan and begin to add and orient new trustees, including members of the next generation within the family, as well as trustees from outside the family.
- Work with the trustees to determine where the foundation can do the greatest good, developing imaginative and effective grantmaking policies and evaluating how to make the most positive impact on the communities served.
- Lead the foundation through this period of transition and into a highly productive future, helping the family bring together differing priorities and personality styles in order to fulfill Mr. Dobbs' legacy in truly exciting and innovative ways.

The new President will be deeply involved in every step of this transformation, working closely with current and new trustees, foundation advisors, and staff members to fulfill the foundation's mission and to honor Mr. Dobbs' legacy in a way that all will view with pride.

THE LOCATION

The administrative offices of the R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation are located in the Hurt Building in downtown Atlanta. Some travel will be required around Georgia and the southeast to visit prospective grantees, and to attend occasional conferences and continuing education opportunities.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the President will fall into five principal categories:

1. *Strategic Leadership of the Foundation's Grantmaking.* Building on the work done by the foundation to define the legacy of Mr. Dobbs, the President of the Foundation will establish an office that exhibits professionalism and demonstrates a commitment to the community by determining how best to serve it within the areas of focus identified by the trustees. The President will be responsible for appropriate and timely communication to all inquiries by prospective grantees and will initiate requests for proposal to organizations in areas the foundation might consider supporting. Helping the trustees become more thoughtful and imaginative in their grantmaking and determining how to make the

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President
R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation, Inc.
January 2007
Page 4 of 5

greatest positive impact on the issues they choose to address will be key to success.

2. *Programs.* In consultation with the board, the President will continue to develop and oversee the Foundation's grantmaking protocols. Consistent with the Foundation's mission, the new leader will make recommendations to the board regarding Foundation initiatives, priorities and policies and will keep the board abreast of program effectiveness and outcomes. Similarly, the President will be expected to stay fully current on relevant issues, initiatives, practices and resources needed to implement board-approved philanthropic objectives.
3. *Board Governance.* The President will lead the Foundation through a process of formalizing its operations and developing a strong and active board. Working in close partnership with the Chairman, the President will implement a plan to begin recruiting and training new board members, which will include both selected members of the next generation and outside trustees. As part of this work, the new leader will create special opportunities for training and mentoring for interested members of the next generation of the Dobbs' family, in preparation for their potential role as future board members. The President is responsible for building excellent communications and a positive working relationship with all board members in order to help them work together constructively to achieve the Foundation's goals.
4. *External Relations.* The President will be the Dobbs Foundation's chief spokesperson, with responsibility for articulating the Foundation's vision, mission and, where appropriate, its funding priorities and activities. Representing the Foundation, with the Board Chair, in all aspects of public relations and with the media and presenting a strong, positive image to relevant stakeholders are important responsibilities. The new leader will develop and maintain strong working relationships and partnerships with community agencies and other grantmakers, actively participating in relevant local, regional and national networks.
5. *Administration.* The President will be responsible for the effective stewardship and oversight of the Foundation's operating and financial assets, consistent with board-approved policies and strategies, ensuring that all resources are managed to optimal effect. The Foundation's investments will be managed by outside professionals, but the President will be directly accountable for the management of the Foundation's staff and the soundness of the Foundation's operating finances, including its budgets, control and audit functions.

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President
R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation, Inc.
January 2007
Page 5 of 5

THE CANDIDATE

The R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation is an equal opportunity employer, and a diverse set of compelling candidates is being sought for formal consideration. The ideal candidate will have experience as a grantmaker and will enjoy working with a family foundation to help it honor the legacy of its founder in proactive and creative ways.

Among the assets and attributes being sought are the following:

- A well-respected leader of integrity and discretion.
- Experienced grantmaker who understands and enjoys working with family dynamics.
- A person of strong, intuitive people skills and sound judgment.
- Brings a proven record of strong process orientation and the ability and desire to manage details with accuracy.
- Arrives at meetings in a punctual manner and is always well prepared.
- An innate sense of what is appropriate; diplomatic and will maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.
- Capable, presents self with a sense of quiet self-confidence.
- An intuitive listener who draws people out, distilling information and bringing people of differing opinions to consensus.
- A passionate and caring person balanced with an appropriate sense of detachment and a calm spirit.
- Professional, consistent and flexible, can go with the flow while keeping things on track.
- A friendly, outgoing person who gets along well with all kinds of people.
- Intelligent, thoughtful and mature.
- Entrepreneurial, is willing to consider a wide variety of options and try new ideas.
- Well-rounded, caring, poised, genuine.
- Excellent at both internal and external communications, brings strong writing skills and is an articulate public speaker.
- A passion for the environment and an interest in one or more of the focus areas of the foundation would be a plus.
- A master's degree in a related field.

For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect, please cite Dobbs Foundation in an e-mail to info@boardwalkconsulting.com,

or call Margaret Reiser or Kelly Lee at 404 - BoardWalk (404-262-7392).

For more information on BoardWalk Consulting, please visit our website at www.boardwalkconsulting.com.

January 2007

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The National Center for Family Philanthropy is deeply grateful to all our funders and to the organizations that provided designated support to The CEO Initiative, to the research, and to the programs that made this guide possible.

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Acknowledgements

The National Center for Family Philanthropy is deeply grateful for the many people and organizations that have made this guide and the entire CEO Leadership Initiative possible.

The financial support of our funders, and our Friends of the Family members in particular, makes everything we do possible.

The National Center's board and staff conceived of the CEO Leadership Initiative, and our outstanding CEO Advisory Committee helped guide it to fruition. You honor our work by your commitment to it.

We are also grateful to Susan Crites Price, former National Center vice president, who played a key role in the initiative and authored this guide as well as two others in this series.

Finally, we owe huge thanks to the many CEOs, board members, and experts who candidly and thoughtfully shared their insights—through phone and in-person interviews, our online survey, and participation in our national symposium. Your colleagues current and future reap the benefits of the time and effort you put into this work.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan Crites Price is a former vice president of the National Center for Family Philanthropy and is now a consultant and freelance writer. She is the author or co-author of several books including *The Giving Family: Raising Our Children to Help Others*. She is a frequent speaker on next generation philanthropy.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY PHILANTHROPY

A nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, the National Center for Family Philanthropy has, for 15 years, been the nation's leading voice for the value—and values—of family philanthropy. The National Center has sponsored groundbreaking research on governance practices, family dynamics, and management options for families, and has developed a living, growing database of several hundred profiles and stories of families engaged in philanthropy. We have published many of the field's most widely read guides and issues papers, organized national symposia, and presented at hundreds of events in cities and regions around the world on our core belief in the continuing value of family involvement in philanthropy.



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