



Building an outstanding leadership team



When your organisation is experiencing change you and your leadership team will encounter many challenges. Maybe you are struggling with how to replace a departing CEO, how to engage your leadership team in ambitious growth plans or work with your team to change your organisational culture. How do you face these challenges so as to deliver the maximum benefit for your beneficiaries?

The hidden challenge that is the key to success

People are vital to the success of nonprofit organisations, yet it is often difficult to overcome the initial

reluctance to invest precious resources in developing the leadership team.

Findings from a recent review into leadership teams of the UK top 500 charities undertaken by Compass Partnership and Cass CCE reveal that the most effective nonprofit leadership teams recognise that they are unable to take on large organisational challenges without first addressing their own development. They recognise that they are the critical driving force that must function effectively, otherwise resources will be wasted and beneficiaries' needs neglected. They see investing in their own development as essential to achieving the organisational aims in the most efficient way possible.

We understand this fundamental challenge within nonprofit organisations and work with our clients to deliver long term, lasting benefits to their beneficiaries through developing their top teams.

The drivers for outstanding leadership teams

Leadership teams are an important driving force of larger charities and have a significant impact on the way the organisation works and its overall effectiveness, yet limited study has taken place in this field. Our review into leadership teams starts to address this. It has identified the top five key drivers needed for outstanding teams:

1. **Leadership of behaviour:** being seen to model behaviours, acting as a team, communicating well with managers and nurturing stakeholders systemically.
2. **Great team working:** valuing each other and personal differences, working as a cohesive group, being open about mistakes and good at compromising.
3. **Effective team meetings:** requiring members to listen and use each other's talents.
4. **Leadership of strategy and impact:** being clear about strategy, being good at tracking the achievement of strategic objectives and maintaining a sharp focus on strategic issues.
5. **Investment in team development:** time for team development, reviewing honestly their own performance and planning the improvement of team performance.

The Compass Partnership and Cass CCE review, *Building Outstanding Leadership Teams: insights from charity chief executives* states:

“Although leaders can have a more positive view of their performance than their followers, around a **third of chief executives felt their leadership teams were only quite effective**. Furthermore, we discovered that a quarter have seven or fewer of the top 20 drivers in place. We conclude that many larger charities have significant opportunities to improve the performance of their leadership teams.”
(Hudson & Ashworth, 2014)



THE COMPASS CASS MODEL OF OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP TEAM PERFORMANCE



The Compass Cass Model of Outstanding Leadership Team Performance, including the 20 key drivers to enable leadership teams (Hudson & Ashworth, 2014)

How we can help develop your team

As the only dedicated nonprofit Centre for Charity Effectiveness in the UK, this sector is our specialism. We not only undertook the review into leadership teams (in collaboration with Compass) but we truly understand its implications. We will help you transform the learning into practical solutions for increasing the effectiveness of your organisation.

1. Tailor-made Building Outstanding Leadership Teams support

There are many different approaches as to how you can build your team. The Compass and Cass CCE review highlights key drivers for outstanding leadership teams, such as leadership behaviour and great team working whilst acknowledging that investing in team development is difficult. Combined with our extensive experience in delivering to our diverse client base, our solutions will help you develop an outstanding leadership team.

2. Individual leadership development

Personal learning is another important factor in organisational success. Through motivating and developing individuals, organisations thrive from the new ideas and theories that their people bring back to work. Our offering includes everything from one-to-one executive coaching to postgraduate MScs, with an eclectic mix of masterclasses and leadership development programmes running throughout the year.

3. Online assessment tool

Following the results from the Compass Partnership and Cass CCE review, we are developing an online diagnostic tool based upon the key 20 drivers to enable leadership teams to establish their current position and to plan for their future development.

About Cass Centre for Charity Effectiveness

Intellectual leadership: developing talent, enhancing performance

Cass CCE enables individuals and organisations within the nonprofit sector to transform in ways that surpass their expectations. We believe that the best way to do this is through research and scholarship (intellectual leadership); teaching through our courses and programmes (developing talent); and offering consultancy support and knowledge exchange services (enhancing performance).

If you would like more information or an initial informal introductory discussion to see how we can help you, please call or email us.

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