

Managing an executive transition can be one of the most important and challenging jobs a board of directors faces. The Interim Executive Network (IEN) acts as a referral service and source of information about interim executives for nonprofits in transition. The IEN Steering Committee of experienced interims also provides training, mentoring and support to professional interims and individuals entering the field.

### HOW AN INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CAN HELP AN ORGANIZATION IN TRANSITION:



#### Identifying opportunities for change

By taking a fresh look at the organization, an interim executive director (ED) can help the board to make difficult and necessary changes before the next long-term ED arrives - essentially doing the hard work before the new leader even walks in the door. The interim ED can ensure that opportunities and new ways of doing business that emerge during a transition are identified and leveraged.



#### Conducting a review of the organization's policies and practices

Drawing on the experience of working with different boards and organizations - and as a member of a network of professional interim executives - an interim executive director can suggest best practices for maximizing organizational effectiveness.



#### Giving the board time to make the right decision

Boards often miss valuable growth opportunities when they rush to fill a vacant position. An interim executive director can provide time and opportunity to reflect on the current and future needs of the organization.

### WHY AN INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IS BETTER THAN:

**An existing staff member:** Adding the ED's responsibilities to an existing workload frequently means neither job will be done well. It may also encourage expectations if the staff member is interested in the ED position, creating tensions if they are not hired. In addition, the perception that an internal candidate has an "inside track" can limit the number of qualified candidates willing to apply for the position.

**A Board member:** Most volunteer board members do not have executive experience in the nonprofit sector. After taking on the interim position, they may find that they do not know enough about the ED's role to fill it effectively.