

Organizational Diagnosis: What's Really Happening?

What we hear...

What we see...



River Network supports organizations of all sizes and structures with capacity-building. Our team compiled a list of what we often hear from organizations, and paired those statements with what we usually find to be the root problem when we start digging deeper. Use this guide to start diagnosing areas of growth, knowing that our online resources and consulting support can help you along the way.

STRUCTURE & DECISION-MAKING

“One person at my organization is doing everything”

“Nothing gets done in our board/committee/advisory group”

“There isn’t anyone who can take on all of this work”

“We aren’t sure who makes the final decision on this”

“We can’t agree on what we need to do”

“We struggle moving decisions to actions”

“We’ve tried that before, and it didn’t work”

Lack of clarity around roles & responsibilities

Unclear agendas, unprepared members, and minimal follow up

Lack of shared leadership and poorly distributed work

Lack of decision-making structures and processes

Lack of strong & clear mission/vision or values/purpose statements

Hesitation to delegate and identify who is responsible

Fear & hesitation to try things and learn from them

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FUNDING & FINANCIAL MGMT

"If we only had more money..."

"We just need a grant writer"

"We don't have capacity to fundraise"

"There isn't enough money to..."

"I don't know what's in the budget, or if we have one"

"Budgets are scary and I don't know what I'm doing"

Poor management of existing funds and funders

Poor document management and underutilization of skills

Lack of shared fund development strategy

Failure to account for direct & indirect costs in budgets

One person managing finances and low/no interest from others

Over complication of financial systems/failure to hire support

LEADERSHIP

"I'm too busy/overallocated"

"I'm not getting enough support"

"I can't tell if what we're doing is impactful"

No/minimal workplanning

Misalignment of resources with needs

Lack of evaluation and feedback systems

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STRATEGIC PLANNING

"Strategic planning is boring and waste of time"

"It's pointless to plan out that far in advance"

"We don't have time or energy to invest in a strategic plan"

Organizations not using their plan strategically

Inability to adapt within the framework of the plan

Deprioritizing long-term planning in favor of short-term actions

VOLUNTEER MGMT

"Our volunteers don't come back"

"We need more people to do...if I just had more people...."

"We have access to a lot people, but they don't show up"

Lack of communication platforms or volunteer tracking systems

Unrealistic expectations for volunteer labor & roles

Poor retention strategies and communication methods

Learn more & access resources at rivernetwork.org

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Department of Environmental Conservation

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