

Survival Strategies for Nonprofits in the Age of Covid 19

Big Idea Nonprofit Consulting

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How Should Nonprofit Leaders Respond?

- It's a marathon, not a sprint
- Learn and adjust
- Make hard decisions
- Lead



Accelerate

- Fundraise. Ask now. Double down.
- Pivot – rise to the challenge
- Make a new financial plan. Cash is king
- Meet more often
- Be visible



Front Line Organizations

- Think like an entrepreneur
- Pivot
- Have an Action Plan:
 - **External Assessment.** Listen. Have clarity. Identify gaps in service.
 - **Internal Assessment.** Staff capacity. Financial capacity. Fundraising.



Big Idea

1. How you are going to solve the problem:

- **What** you are going to change?
- **How** are you going to do it?
- **Who** is going to do the work? Who is the payer?

2. **Key outcome** that tells you your idea works?

3. **Quantitative** – how do you know if it will work?



Front Line Organizations

Get the money

- Establish a separate fund for Covid 19 response
- Keep your cash
- Ask for unrestricted funds so you can expand and innovate



Front Line Organizations

Know the path to scale

- Become a bigger organization; partnerships; gov't service; market delivery
- Make sure you have a long term financial plan
- Ensure program quality. Establish feedback loops.



Front Line Organizations

Shine

Make it count

Make sure you get noticed



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Your Goal: **Survive**

- Set aside your task list and make plans now. Bias toward action
- Make the hard decisions now
- Have clarity in your decision-making
- Use your board and meet more often



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Plan but Maintain Impact

1. Action Plan – solutions driven
2. Financial Forecast
3. Scenario Plans
 - **Risk assessment** – what are the risks?
 - **Mitigation** – what can we do to minimize risk?
 - **Contingency** – what do we do if things get worse?



Local & Regional Nonprofits Financials

1. Go lean
2. Forecast conservatively. Operating reserve?
3. **Cash is king.** Know your burn rate and check it monthly. Weekly is better.
4. Check on line of credit with bank
5. Freeze. Payables, rent etc.
6. Limit spending. Make sure staff know limits. CEO/ED sign off



Local & Regional Nonprofits Fundraising

1. Be sensitive
2. Do it now and double down. Don't wait until summer or end of year
3. Be transparent
4. Your best funders are your best thought partners



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5. Impress your funders

- Action plan, financial forecast, scenario plans, operating reserve, % of budget for year funded

6. Be specific with measurable outcomes

- How many people? Cost? Gaps in programming?
Use hard numbers.



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Fundraising

7. “Our plan is to accomplish X but with your donation we can do X + Y”
8. Get the cash now
9. Continue your communication plan



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Impact

1. Don't take risks
2. Focus on high impact
3. Measure everything you do
4. Be open to new opportunities
5. Don't lose sight of the future



Local & Regional Nonprofits Communicate

1. Be visible
2. Make your funders look good
3. Be transparent but optimistic. Be repetitious
4. Communicate your plans and strategies
5. Capture stories



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Self Care; Staff Care

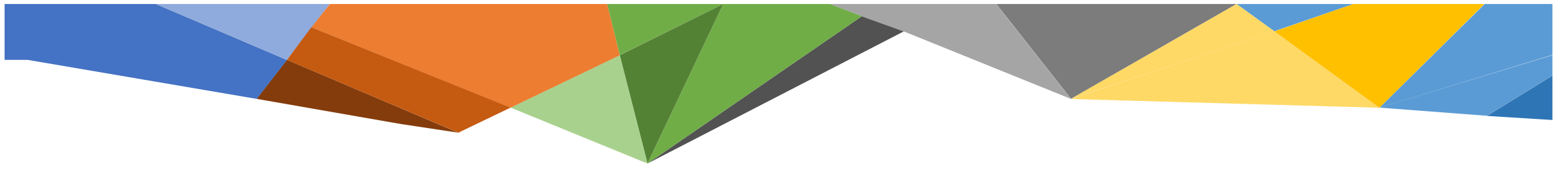
1. It's a responsibility, not a luxury
2. Make hard decisions with empathy
3. Over communicate and meet more often
3. Check in
5. Shared sacrifice if you have to cut
6. If you have to cut, give staff time to make contingency plans



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Recommit to your organizational values

You will be different



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