



## Create and Maintain a “Success Journal”

Nonprofit Executive Directors (EDs) accomplish a lot.

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But, it is sometimes hard to demonstrate this impact to your most important stakeholders: The Board.

Ideally, EDs will have an annual performance review that includes goal accomplishment and achievement of their duties. Many of your accomplishments are “in-process” or not clearly visible. It is in everyone’s best interest for the ED to maintain a success journal.

A success journal is an ongoing, informal list of accomplishments that can later be summarized for your performance review. The success journal can be called upon to recount your legacy after you leave the organization that wasn't necessarily captured in grant reports or annual reports. It also helps to keep a “praise” file of nice comments you received during the year.

You may choose to capture elements from the [Key ED Responsibilities list](#), or Some things to track in your journal include:

- Human resources: Did you get professional development? Did your duties increase? Did you improve the HR systems or retain/recruit people better than before?
- Are there special short-term projects or events you took on that are important but ultimately aren’t reflected in metrics? Did you explore a merger or a new program? Even if you didn’t move forward, that work should be captured. It is part of your work that still matters.
- Relationships: Have you expanded the organization's reach, relationships or reputation? Have you deepened trust among stakeholders?
- Capacity: Did you get smarter and more strategic? Did you improve systems? , therefore, saving time and money? Write it down.
- Saving time and money: Did you provide new or better due diligence, deduplication, efficiencies, or cost savings? Did your management of the finances have an ROI?
- Are you meeting and beating every deadline?

Use the prompts below or create your own to log a success journal of your own.

# Executive Director (ED) Success Journal



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Problems I was able to solve or improve:

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Relationships and partnerships I'm building:

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Without my actions or judgement, these things would be worse:

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# Executive Director (ED) Success Journal



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Ways I've made us more effective, nimble, or resilient:

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Ways I've grown our capacity (technology, training, reputation):

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Ways I've created the conditions for success/mission attainment:

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# Executive Director (ED) Success Journal



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Ways I've strengthened our PR, public standing, or visibility:

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Ways I've grown or retained human resources (prof. development):

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Ways I've strengthened the quality or rigor of our systems:

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Other:

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