

Council's Desired Culture

Commitment to Quality Member Service

The Council desires to be an organization in which talented and intelligent people work together to advance the field of philanthropy and to provide timely quality services and products to our members. We want staff to enjoy contributing their skills and talents to work that has meaning for them and for the members. We also hope the Council makes a difference in the lives of its members. This is important because staff value the contributions the members make to the field of philanthropy and, by extension, to society.

Shared Leadership

The Council tries to share leadership in all directions, vertically and horizontally. We strive to ensure the delegation of responsibility, the taking of initiative, the willingness to experiment and accept mistakes and learn from them for the good of the individual as well as the organization. We seek to use a variety of leadership styles appropriate to various situations we face. We work to give staff the information, time and other resources needed to participate in the short- and long-term performance and improvement of the organization. At the same time, we work to ensure that leadership functions are appropriately delegated and that staff in leadership roles—whether continuous or temporary—have the authority they need to act on behalf of the Council with the full support of their colleagues.

Responsive and Effective Decisionmaking

We work to see that decisions are made by drawing on the most relevant source of information regardless of one's position in the organization. We seek to be proud of our responsiveness to internal and external challenges. We seek decisions that are well thought out, tested, evaluated and improved against the larger goals of the organization and the immediate effects on the participants/recipients of the decision. We work to involve, as much as possible, people in the decisions that affect them. We know this is not always possible, that sometimes management must make decisions that are for the good of the overall organization that may not appear to benefit some individuals or groups of individuals within the Council. If there are poor decisions, we try to acknowledge, address and learn from them. We celebrate good decisions.

Problem Solving

We work to solve problems at their source as a first course of action. We seek to address issues directly with one another. We work to reward identification of problems and suggestion of solutions. We attempt to implement solutions promptly, to evaluate outcomes in timely and systematic ways and to make necessary corrections.

Atmosphere of Candor

We want an atmosphere of candor at the Council. We want staff to know they can address issues or concerns with each other directly, regardless of organizational position. We work for an atmosphere where praise and critique are welcomed as signs of interest and concern and both are given in the same manner. We want an attitude of constant learning and improvement. We work to make sure that people have access to the information they need. Collaboration and cooperation should be encouraged. We try to remember that none of us is as smart as all of us. We want people to willingly support the efforts of their colleagues because it is all for the good of the Council. We want individuals to take personal responsibility for their actions and amend them when needed. We hope staff take pride in their work.

Flexibility in Support of the Mission

We strive to remain flexible while establishing processes that support our mission. We work in an environment in which systems for staff hiring, orientation and promotion, planning, accounting, information management, etc. are viewed by all as integral parts of the work of the Council. We work to ensure that program evaluation is used to improve the process for the next time.

Diversity and Unity

We want an organization in which staff is diverse and unified. We strive for an appreciation of experience represented by individual staff members and for using those experiences to bring out the best each person has to offer to the Council. We work to make this appreciation of difference possible through organizational actions and practices, including direct and candid conversation, training and development. In this way, we will have rich individual experiences and, as an organization, will be better equipped to serve diverse constituencies within the membership.

High Standards

We seek to be an organization in which people want to achieve high standards, where staff fulfill their responsibilities and expect their colleagues to do the same. We work to create clear rewards for exceptional work. We work to make staff development a priority. We strive to ensure that staff receive the coaching and other support they need to accomplish their work. We try to consider staff performance in light of contributions to the overall Council goals, collaborate when appropriate and meet individual work plans. We seek an organization in which managers are considered coaches and role models, mentors and guides.

The culture we seek to create and operate in is not an end in itself. We seek such a culture because we believe that it will allow us to better serve our members and the field of philanthropy.