

## How to Begin Your Transition into the Nonprofit Sector

You have already decided that you would like to find a career in the nonprofit sector, but how do you know what opportunity is right for you? How do you ensure that you find a place where you can have meaningful impact and use your skills effectively? Through Bridgestar's work with senior leaders who have transitioned into the nonprofit sector, we have begun to synthesize a series of critical questions for individuals making the decision to join a nonprofit. To read more about our research and findings, click [here](#).

The decision to change careers is highly personal and unique. These questions are only a starting point for you in contemplating a transition into the nonprofit sector. By considering these questions you will better understand the organizations and positions in which you can have your greatest personal impact.

How entrepreneurial is this organization? How entrepreneurial can I be in this particular management role?

Does this organization seem open to the application of business discipline to its operations?

Which organizational systems and/or procedures resemble my for-profit environment?

Is there a business practice embedded in the organization—e.g., venture capital or entrepreneurship? Will my for-profit experience support this organization's efforts to apply business practices to their social change mission?

What are the specific job requirements for the position? How will my for-profit skill sets enable me to perform my job responsibilities?

How comfortable do I feel managing individuals who have diverse professional backgrounds or leading a staff that may be staffed in different geographic locations?

How do I influence people? Would I feel comfortable managing volunteers and board members over whom I do not have direct supervisory authority? How would I motivate them to help me implement the mission of this organization?

**Bridgestar** ([www.bridgestar.org](http://www.bridgestar.org)), an initiative of the Bridgespan Group, provides a nonprofit management job board, content, and tools designed to help nonprofit organizations build strong leadership teams and individuals pursue career paths as nonprofit leaders.

### **Boston**

535 Boylston St., 10th Floor  
Boston, MA 02116  
P 617 572-2833  
F 617 572-2834

### **New York**

3 Times Sq., 25th Floor  
New York, NY 10036  
P 646 562-8900  
F 646 562-8901

### **San Francisco**

465 California St., 11th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94104  
P 415 627-1100  
F 415 627-4575