

How to Put Your Organization's Superpower to Work

As we assert in the article [“In a Crisis, Resilient Nonprofits Tap into Their Superpower,”](#) every successful nonprofit has that special something—a unique mindset, capability, or asset—that sets it apart and helps advance its impact in the world. In other words, a superpower.

When a nonprofit summons its superpower, it stands a better chance of pushing through adversity and even seizing new opportunities that a crisis might reveal. Moreover, a superpower can help pressure test whether the organization has correctly identified its [10-year vision](#)—another key part of building organizational resilience. After all, an organization's unique capability is what will propel it toward its long-term destination. When the superpower is aligned with the organization's bold, far-off vision, the organization increases the odds that it will achieve it.

If you want to define your nonprofit's superpower and put it to work, gather your team and carve out 60-to-90 minutes to have that discussion, without outside interruptions. Your team might work through the five questions below, which aim to get the conversation going. Share the questions in advance of the meeting, so team members have time to reflect.

Defining your superpower

When we describe our organization to someone who doesn't know us very well, what do we emphasize that's distinctive about who we are and what we do?

Alternatively, you could ask: What would lead someone outside of our organization (a client, a funder, a partner, a prospective hire) to fund, engage, or work for us, instead of some other organization?

Also consider the following potential categories for where you may have unique assets. Pick 1-2 *critical* assets across categories that you think are particularly distinctive:

- a. Programs and approaches
- b. Knowledge, IP, and expertise
- c. Talent and leadership
- d. Relationships
- e. Other?

Using your superpower to pressure-test your organization's long-term goals

Keeping your superpower in mind, reflect on your organization's impact goals. Does your superpower align with those goals? Should you revise them? Make them more ambitious?

Harnessing your superpower

Given your (existing or revised) impact goals, how can you use your superpower to greatest effect? What are 1-2 things you can do to more fully utilize your strongest assets?