

What belongs in a nonprofit CEO job description

Eight sections. The first four describe the job, the last four decide whether anyone applies.

SECTION 1

Position summary

Three or four sentences. The mission, who the CEO reports to, and what this person is accountable for.

SECTION 2

Reporting and structure

Board relationship, direct reports, staff size, budget. This is what tells a candidate the real scope.

SECTION 3

Core responsibilities

Grouped, not a list of twenty bullets. Strategy, finance, fundraising, people, programs, external voice.

SECTION 4

The first-year priorities

What has to be true in twelve months. The section most often missing, and the one strong candidates read first.

SECTION 5

Qualifications

Separate the required from the preferred. Every unnecessary requirement narrows your pool.

SECTION 6

Compensation

A published range. Postings without one draw few and less senior applicants.

SECTION 7

Location and work pattern

On-site, hybrid or remote, stated plainly, with travel expectations.

SECTION 8

How to apply

Where it goes, what to send, who reads it, and what happens next.

Title does not settle the job. Whether the role is called CEO or Executive Director matters far less than what sections 2, 3 and 4 actually say. Two organizations can use the same title for very different work.

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A structural checklist, not a template. The responsibilities in sections 3 and 4 should change with staff size, funding mix and how much operational work the executive personally carries.

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