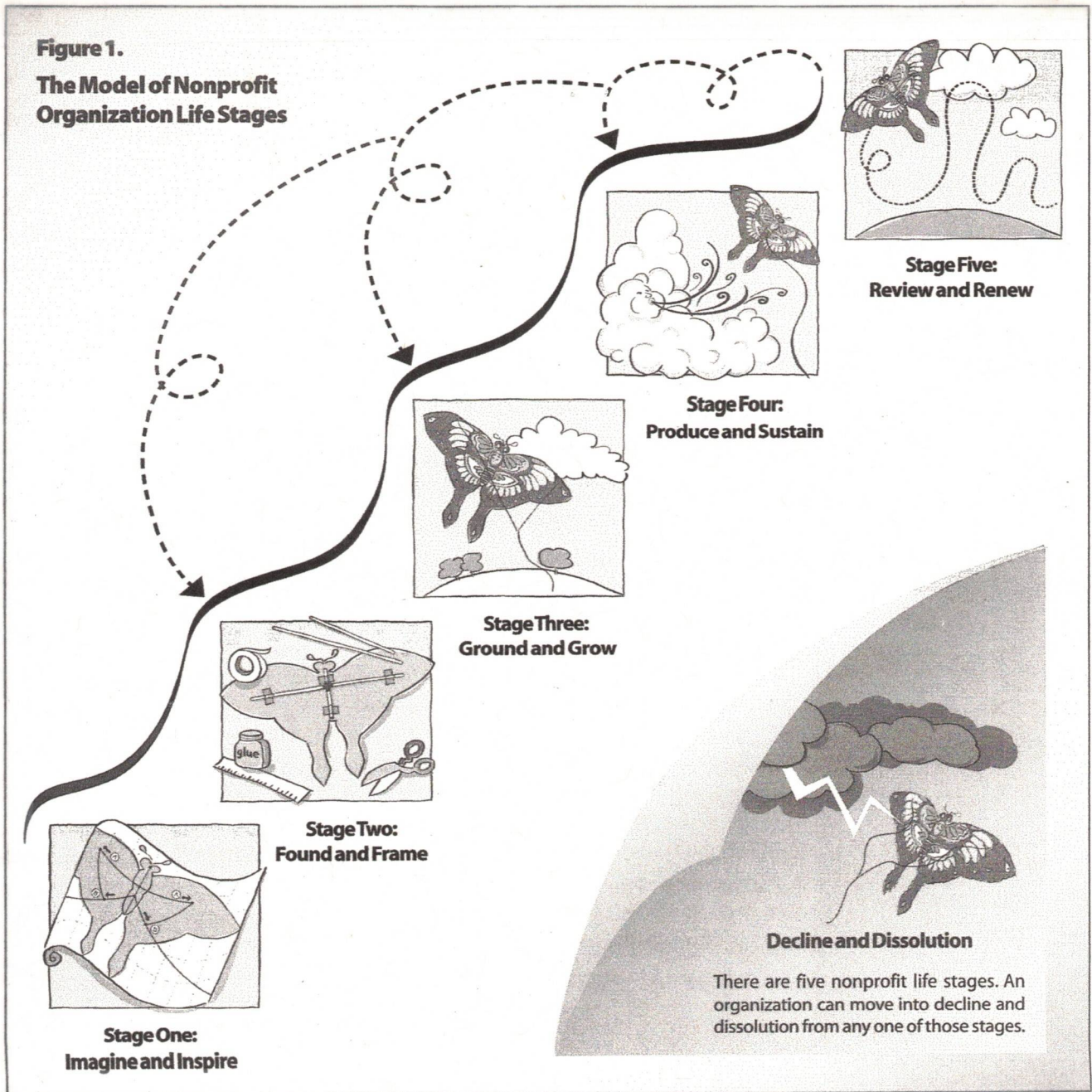


Eliciting Optimal Value from Your Leaders

Five Life Stages of Nonprofit Organizations

By Judy Sharken Simon

Figure 1.
The Model of Nonprofit Organization Life Stages



Early Stage
Founding / Organizing
 Size: Small (3-10)

Board IS the organization; involved in everything from fundraising and marketing to mission implementation.

Little distinction between administration and policy.

Homogeneous
 Informal – consensus decision-making.

Few if any committees.

Board finds it difficult to hire/trust first staff members and share power.

Leading:
 Circle of leaders with shared vision and close ties to mission.

Following:
 One leader gathers supportive group (may rubber stamp ideas of founder).



Middle Stage
Managing / Governing
 Size: Medium (10-20)

Board assumes responsibility for well-being and longevity of organization.

Board is enlarged and diversified to include “strangers” with specific skills.

Formalized decision-making process; Administration expanded.

Professional staff are hired and given more responsibilities and power; Increased reliance on staff recommendations.

Committee structure allows for delegation of tasks.

Fundraising increasingly important; Roles and job descriptions clearer.

Focus on policy, planning, oversight.

Strained/challenged by growth or crisis (organizational or financial);

Leaders overwhelmed/burned out;

Division on key issues;

Role clarification creates unrest;

Some founding members leave.



Mature Stage
Governing / Fundraising
 Size: Large (20-100)

Focus on recruiting larger board with capacity to give or connect with donors, funders, or influencers.

Being on board considered prestigious.

Oversight and decisions delegated to staff or a strong Executive Committee.

Planning, budgeting done by staff and approved by board.

Strong commitment to fundraising, which becomes more professional and institutional.

Strained/challenged by growth or crisis;

Frustration over slow pace of change;

Difficulty distinguishing between how board and staff are independent and interdependent;

Micromanagement causes tension.

Fostering More Strategic Governance

Ingredients of a Kickass Board Meeting

1)

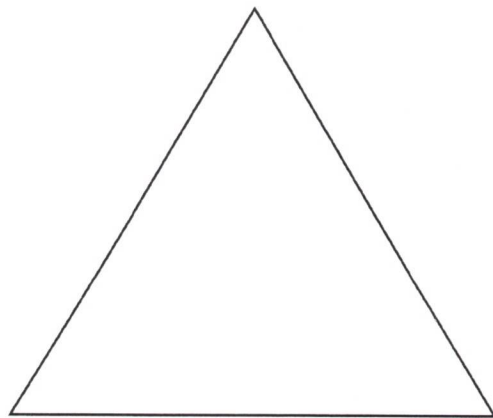
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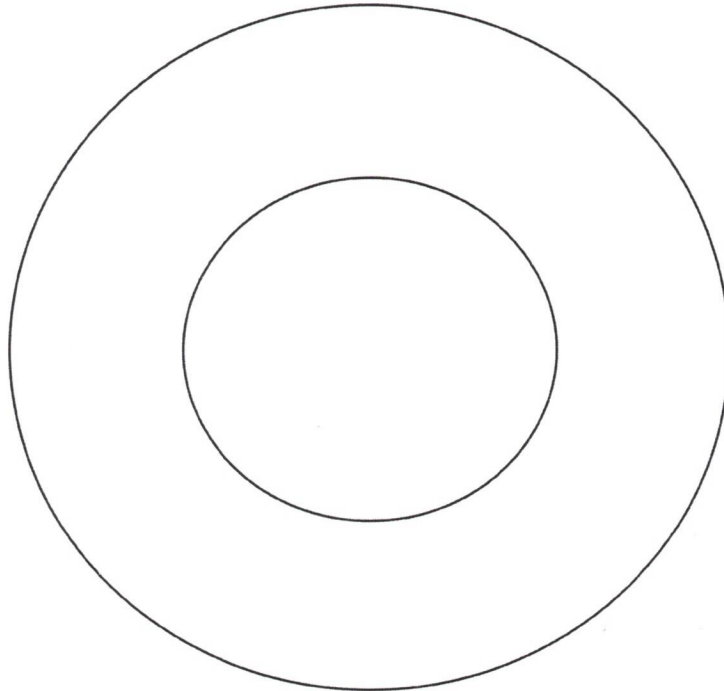
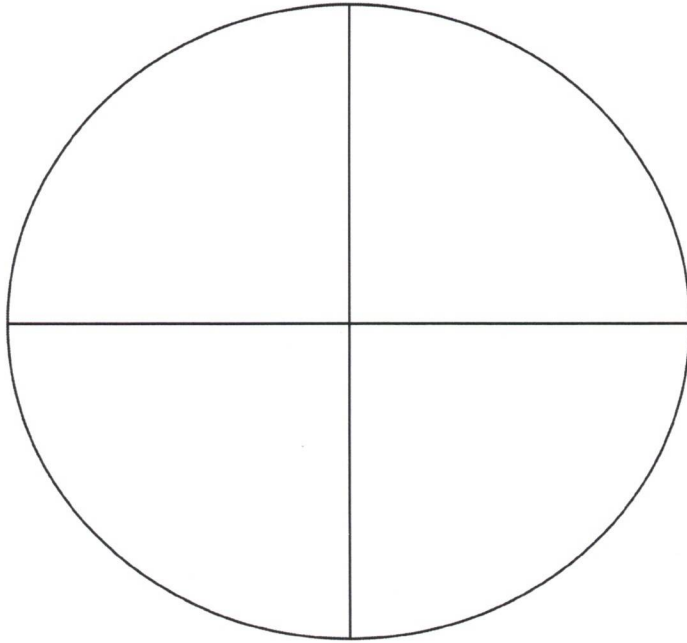
4)

5)

Making Room for More Generative Conversations

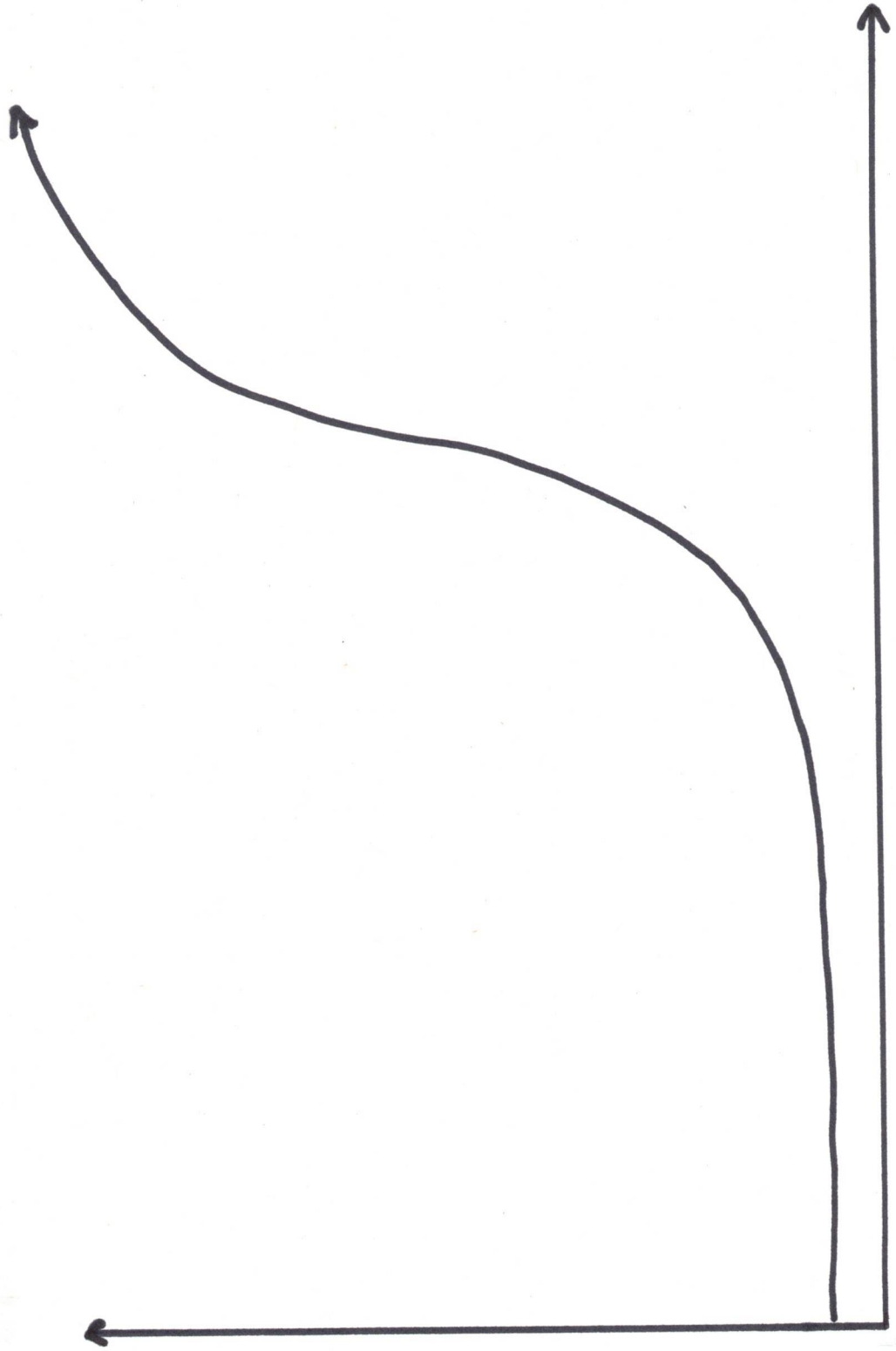


Clarifying Fundraising Assignments



The Tarnside Curve of Involvement

Patrick Boggen, Tarnside Consulting, UK



Equipping More Compelling Ambassadors

Focusing Attention

Asking Open-Ended Questions

Sharing Impact, Not Activities (So What, Not What)

Recruiting New Leaders

Building a Recruitment Matrix (and 4 Characteristics to Look For)

Locating Willing Leaders

Giving Them Bite-Sized Assignments