

2022 Operations Improvement Survey Executive Summary

Process and operations improvement has continued despite the pandemic, according to our recent survey. Our study of philanthropic foundations found that many organizations continue to improve how they get work done. Yet according to the survey, leaders are worried about staff readiness for more change. The survey results also point to ideas on how to make further improvements to operations and outcomes.

THE STUDY

Innovation Process Design (IPD) recently surveyed community foundations on operations and process improvements. We also conducted follow-up conversations with key leaders to learn more about the problems and challenges addressed in the survey. This document summarizes key findings and resources for next steps. We will be conducting three webinars to address how to overcome common operational problems identified through our survey. Learn more and register for these free webinars at: <https://improveprocess.net/events/>.

WHAT IS OPERATIONS?

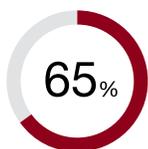
Operations—the work done to execute an organization’s mission—is critical to achieving success. About 90 percent of most philanthropic organizations’ resources are dedicated to operations, so it is essential to create efficient operational processes that will achieve the greatest return on investment. For example, it is fastest and cleanest to administer grant payments through electronic payments that land where nonprofits can access them immediately.

THE COMMON THEME: CHANGE

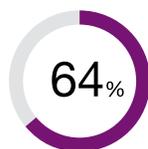
It comes as no surprise that nonprofit foundations have been buffeted by the same limitations and shifting parameters that have affected every industry and philanthropic endeavor in the past two years. Continuing with “business as usual” has not been a viable option for anyone in the nonprofit sector. Our study indicated that organizations have adapted in the following ways as a result of the pandemic:



Even as the pandemic wanes, many organizations anticipate making further organizational and operational changes in the near future. Nearly two-thirds expect appreciable growth in their organizations as the pandemic eases:



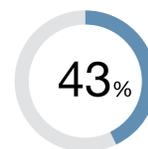
65% expect to bring in a major new operation



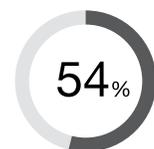
64% expect growth of 10% or more in gifts and grants



83% expect to expand or add new programs



43% plan to create or execute a new strategic plan



54% expect to bring on new senior leaders

One of the key components of successful operations is employees’ skill and will. Employees must be trained and equipped to carry out their assigned responsibilities, and they must feel that their work contributes to the organization’s central mission in important ways. Fifty percent of the organizations responding to our survey are worried about staff being worn out by the overwhelming change of the last two years. This recognition is making leaders hesitant to ask their team to implement still more operations improvements, but not doing so hampers the organizations’ vision and capacity. Helping people anticipate and adapt to change is what the principles of Human Change Management are all about. IPD explores these concepts in our upcoming webinar: *Three Ways to Ready Operations Staff for More Change*.

NEXT OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE OPERATIONS

In asking organizations how they have changed their operations during the past two years, we focused on four specific areas: process, people, policy, and systems.



SUMMARY

Designing efficient, workable processes and managing operations wisely can improve an organization's impact in countless ways. Many organizations have successfully improved how work is done and have reaped benefits in the form of better outcomes and greater employee satisfaction.

Learn more about how you can do the same by contacting Lee Kuntz at lee@improveprocess.net. Or attend our no-cost webinars: *Your Next Operations Opportunities*, *Three Ways to Ready Operations Staff for More Change*, and *Maximize New Software Investment and Success with Process Redesign--Three Case Studies*. Learn more and register at: <https://improveprocess.net/events/>.

ABOUT INNOVATION PROCESS DESIGN

We provide process improvement coaching and training to organizations to help them change outcomes. We believe that employees can transform the way they do work when they have strong process skills. Innovation Process Design has been helping organizations for over 20 years.



Lee Kuntz is founder and president of Innovation Process Design, Inc. As a certified process coach, she provides process improvement training and coaching to help teams look at their work with new eyes, transform how work gets done, and create tangible results in operations efficiency and effectiveness.

Questions? Please contact

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