Succession Learning Group

The Succession Learning Group (SLG) is a cohort-based, four-part series designed to support current CEOs of GSF member organisations who want to develop and strengthen their organizational approach to succession planning.

Why succession?
Succession is one of the most critical chapters in an educational organization’s life span. A strong and intentional approach to succession has the potential to place an organization on a positive trajectory; a poor approach can have the opposite effect, significantly weakening the organization. Yet even with the high stakes associated with succession, surprisingly few resources exist to provide support for this important endeavor. The SLG provides participants with specific tactics and strategies to build organizational capacity around effective succession planning.

Why a “Learning Group”?
Succession planning can feel especially isolating for a leader. Often, leaders won’t discuss succession with key stakeholders; they may feel that talking about succession with Board members will jeopardize their tenure, or that discussions with senior leaders in the organization will create undue anxiety or uncertainty. The SLG is designed to provide its participants with a confidential community where they can access usable and relevant knowledge to develop and strengthen their respective organization’s approach to succession planning.

What will participants gain from the SLG?
By the end of the SLG, participants will:
• Understand the key phases of the “arc” of succession and the risks associated with each phase, and create organization-specific plans to mitigate those risks
• Create a job description that accurately captures their role and set of responsibilities
• Identify the role and function of a Board Succession committee
• Learn characteristics of high-quality “succession emergency” communications and plans
• Inventory the “CEO-readiness” of potential internal successors, identify aspects of strong development plans, and learn approaches to build their credibility with Board members
• Engage in a process to understand their own readiness to transition from their current role

How will the SLG be structured?
A small group of CEOs of GSF member organizations will meet four times for 90 minutes per session. Over the course of the SLG, participants will:
• Access artifacts, best practices and current research relevant to the topic of succession
• Use a protocol to share succession-related challenges and access the thinking, wisdom, and experience of their peers
• Create specific plans to strengthen their respective organization’s approach to succession
• Have access to two 60-minute sessions of independent executive coaching with the facilitator
What is the expectation of participants?
Participants must commit to attending all four sessions. They may be asked to do approximately 1 hour of independent work between sessions.

About First Person
First Person is a consulting organization that provides its clients with coaching, tools and resources to strengthen their most important asset - their people! First Person works with new and experienced senior leaders who share the belief that an organization’s success depends on its leaders’ ability and desire to continuously improve. Three core beliefs guide all of First Person’s services:

- organizations achieve their goals through people
- trust and relationships among and between colleagues are the most important engines of improvement
- it is the senior leader’s responsibility to foster and facilitate a strong organizational culture

For more information, visit www.firstpersonglobal.org.