

2020

## Nonprofit Leaders' Strategies for Retaining Donors

Robert Enchil  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Robert Enchil

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University  
2020

Abstract

Nonprofit Leaders' Strategies for Retaining Donors

by

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EMBA, Baylor University, 2016

LLM, University of Texas, 2014

LLB, Wolverhampton University, 2004

Consulting Capstone Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

June 2020

## Abstract

Nonprofit leaders who fail to maintain donors negatively impact business operations. Maintaining a stable donor base is crucial for nonprofit leaders to build a secure foundation for their organizations that supports future growth. Grounded in the transformational leadership theory, the purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that 3 leaders of a nonprofit organization located in the Northeast United States used to retain donors for their organizations. Data were collected through semistructured interviews and an analysis of both internal and external organizational documents. Data were analyzed using a thematic analysis; 3 themes emerged to include leaders collaborating and engaging in strategies for improving financing, changing organizational culture to improve performance, and improving leadership style to retain donors. A key recommendation is that the board of directors implement succession planning to set the protocols for donor engagement and revenue creation to establish accountability. A better understanding of effective business practices may allow nonprofit leaders to achieve sustainability for their organizations. Implications for positive social change include the potential to provide nonprofit organizational leaders and other stakeholders with strategies for retaining donors and enhancing existing services, expanding community programs, and building a stable foundation that supports future growth.

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## Dedication

First and foremost, I am thankful to God for continually guiding me throughout this journey. I am thankful to my parents, family, friends, colleagues, fellow cohorts, and doctoral doves worldwide for your support throughout the years.

I wholeheartedly dedicate this study to my two best friends, my (departed) father, Mr. James O. Enchil, for setting an excellent standard for me and my wife, Augustina C. Enchil, for her endless love, listening, and support throughout my doctoral journey. No one completes a study of this magnitude independently, and without her being there, I would not have ever completed this task. To my (departed) mother, Elizabeth E. Jackson, and my (departed) uncle Mr. Robert B. Jackson, who died during my DBA journey, thank you for always encouraging me and pushing me to never give up on my dreams.

Also, I dedicate this to my children, nephews, and nieces, as well as my Pastor Dr. Bernard Buhl, Bishop Col. RTD. Alvin E. Miller, my sister and husband, Mr. & Mrs. Mary Aba Bam, brother-in-law and wife, Mr. & Mrs. Henry Sam-Woode, Rev. Arthur Wright, Mrs. Sonja Wright, my senior brothers, Mr. Kojo and Kwesi Teming-Amoako, Mr. & Mrs. Eben Ewool, uncle Johnny Gharbin, Rev. Ret. Col. Kevin R. Stevenson, Baaba Teming-Amoako and Uncle Clem as inspiration to show how arduous work, tenacity, and discipline pay off and enable success. I am thankful to those that have fought and died, on and off the battlefield, so that I may enjoy the right to such quality of education.

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## Section 1: Foundation of the Study

In this study, I used the 2019-2020 Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (2019) as a tool to explore strategies that nonprofit senior leaders used to retain donors for their organizations. As a requirement of Walden University's Consulting Capstone, I served as both researcher and consultant to an assigned client organization. Nonprofit leaders must find ways to maximize funds to have the most significant impact on those they help (Shen, 2016). Hence, the aim of this capstone study was to offer strategies to nonprofit leaders for the retention of dedicated supporters to sustain and grow nonprofit organizations (NPOs).

### **Background of the Problem**

To maintain a stable donation, nonprofit leaders seeking financial sustainability need to identify donors with the potential to donate more frequently. In this study, I explored strategies that nonprofit senior leaders used to retain donors for their organizations. Leaders of NPOs lose between 40% and 50% of new donors in the year immediately following an initial donation (Shen, 2016). Increasing the level of retention by 10% would improve the net growth in giving for a typical charity database by 50% net growth (Shen, 2016). However, many nonprofit business leaders find it challenging to reach this level (Blouin, Lee, & Erickson, 2018). Nonprofit leaders are no exception in an environment where leaders are required to deliver results immediately (Blouin et al., 2018). Haski-Leventhal and Foot (2016) and Blouin et al. (2018) noted that an innovative change and disclosure by nonprofit leaders in marketing and fundraising could attract household charitable giving while boosting accountability and public trust. Giambra,

Haas, Britto, and Lipstein (2018) offered the caveat that communication behaviors can have a positive influence on reviving lapsed donors but sending overly frequent communications may evoke resistance to appeals. The cost to acquire U.S. \$1 from a new donor averages \$1.25, yet retaining a donor comes at a significantly lower cost (Shen, 2016).

Strategies are essential to help nonprofit business leaders make their organizations retention centered. Researchers have employed relationship marketing as a dialogic tool to explore the utilization of the Internet for fundraising by nonprofit leaders and have noted useful websites that are highly engaged in fundraising (Blouin et al., 2018; Erwin & Dias, 2016; Haski-Leventhal & Foot, 2016). Additionally, Drollinger (2018) proposed strategies that can help nonprofit leaders in their efforts to connect in a meaningful way with significant donors through innovation and motivation of fundraising activities and to instill a sense of trust to enable donors to continue to donate. Leaders need to learn and understand when and how to offer rewards to donors to attract and motivate prospective donors (Malinen & Mankkinen, 2018). As the literature indicates, building a relationship with a significant gift donor is an essential form of fundraising for leaders of nonprofits organizations.

### **Problem Statement**

Nonprofit leaders face financial pressure in using their financial and human resources efficiently to retain donors (Ek, 2017; Zapata Cantu & Mondragon, 2016). Leaders of NPOs lose between 40% and 50% of new donors in the year immediately following an initial donation (Shen, 2016). The general business problem is that some

nonprofit senior leaders lack knowledge of strategies to sustain funding. The specific business problem is that some nonprofit senior leaders lack strategies to retain donors for their organizations.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations. The target population consisted of the chair of the board of directors (BOD) and two leaders of an NPO based in the Northeast United States who have implemented strategies to retain donors for their organizations. The contribution of this study to positive social change may include providing nonprofit leaders with strategic interventions they can use to contribute to the survival and longevity of their organizations. By implementing these interventions, leaders may be able to build a stable foundation for their organizations that supports future growth and fosters new job creation that leads to prosperity in local communities.

### **Nature of the Study**

In this study, I used the qualitative research method. Qualitative researchers seek to answer *what* and *why* questions through interrogative strategies and to achieve a deep understanding of the phenomena under study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). The qualitative method was suitable for this study because I explored strategies that nonprofit executives use to retain donors to gain a deeper understanding of donor retention in the nonprofit sector. Researchers use the quantitative method to test hypotheses through the statistical measurement of the relationships or differences among variables (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). Quantitative methodology was not appropriate for this study because I



explored the phenomenon by assessing participants' experiences of it, rather than testing hypotheses of the relationships or differences between variables. In mixed-methods research, scholars combine quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques and analytical processes to address research questions (Yin, 2018). For this study, I did not use mixed methods to address the research questions because quantitative analysis was not necessary for addressing the study's purpose.

Qualitative researchers may choose from several designs such as phenomenology, narrative inquiry, ethnographic study, and case study. I determined that using a case study design would be appropriate to explore strategies that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations. According to Enwereuzor (2017), scholars use phenomenological designs to explore participants' experiences of a phenomenon with a goal of fully describing the phenomenon. A phenomenological design was not suitable for this study because I did not seek to explore a phenomenon or to describe the meanings of individuals' perceptions, interests, preferences, and experiences of a phenomenon. Qualitative business researchers use ethnographic designs to explore management change and other transformations (Narain, 2017). The ethnographic design is another approach to qualitative research that researchers use to explore complex cultural phenomena and characteristics within a community (Burgstaller, Mayer, Schiess, & Saxer, 2018; Narain & Singh, 2017). The ethnographic design was not appropriate for this study because I did not explore a community and its cultural characteristics. I explored strategies that nonprofit leaders use to retain donors for their organizations.

After evaluating different designs, I concluded that a case study design was

appropriate for this study. Researchers use the qualitative case study design to explore a phenomenon through participants' experiences or differences among variables and to test hypotheses through the statistical measurement of the relationships (Saunders et al., 2015; Yin, 2018). Additionally, Ridder (2017) noted that researchers use a case study design to explore a phenomenon and to highlight similarities and differences across various case study designs and to analyze their respective contributions to theory. By using a case study design, I was able to conduct an in-depth exploration of nonprofit leaders' strategies for retaining donors for their organizations.

### **Research Question**

What strategies do nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations?

### **Interview Questions**

I asked participants the following interview questions:

1. What strategies do you use to retain donors for your organization?
2. How do you determine the effectiveness of the strategies you implemented to retain donors?
3. How do you determine the efficiency and effectiveness of your strategies to retain donors?
4. What, if any, differences have you identified in your organization's strategies for securing sustainable funding from local businesses, private and public foundations, and individual donations?
5. What processes, knowledge, and skills do you use to support strategies for

retaining donors?

6. What more would you like to say about the strategies you use to retain repetitive donors in your organization?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework used in this study was transformational leadership theory (TLT), which was introduced by Burns in 1978. I also drew from Zapata Cantu and Mondragon's (2016) concept of strategies for improving financing and innovation while maintaining donors and formulating management processes of funding. Burns (1978) provided insights about the two concepts of transforming leadership and transactional leadership and expressed that transforming leadership is a process in which leaders and followers help one another to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation. Zapata Cantu and Mondragon determined that leaders must collaborate and engage in concepts and strategies for improving financing and innovation. Furthermore, Burns posited that leaders could use different approaches to create significant changes in the lives of people and benefit organizations to the extent that transformational leaders work hard to change organizational culture to improve performance.

TLC, specifically the concept of transformational leadership styles, was a suitable lens for exploring strategies for retaining donors. Understanding how nonprofit leaders implement leadership styles may assist leaders of present and future NPOs in determining the leadership styles they should use with current and potential donors to build stable relationships that increase retained donors. Transformational leadership was appropriate for this study because it enabled me to explore how senior nonprofit leaders use their

leadership style to develop strategies for retaining donors for NPOs, thus aligning with my research question.

### **Operational Definitions**

*Active fundraising:* An organization or institution organized strategy or actions to promote specific funding opportunities during a designated time (Drollinger, 2018).

*Charitable giving:* A monetary donation given by an individual or an organization to a NPO, charity, or private foundation (Grossman & Van der Weele, 2017; Qu & Steinberg, 2017).

*Donor behaviors:* Actions by an individual donor that are intended to maximize the pleasure of, or to benefit, the recipient (Gleasure & Feller, 2016).

*Fundraising activities:* Events or activities that are designed to obtain voluntary contributions of money or other resources, by requesting donations from individuals, businesses, charitable foundations, or governmental agencies (Milosevic, 2018).

*Nonprofit growth:* The expansion in the number and types of programs and services and new areas of operation that NPO leaders offer to the community (Rinaldi, Parretti, Salimbeni, & Citti, 2015).

*Sustainability:* The ability of nonprofit leaders to retain and deepen relationships with donors (Harrison, Xiao, Ott, & Bortree, 2017; Hurtado Jaramillo, Arimany-Serrat, Vidal, & Ferràs-Hernandez, 2018).

### **Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

#### **Assumptions**

Assumptions are unexamined beliefs considered as accurate by the researcher,

which are not verified or validated (Kim, 2016; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013; Lundgren, 2018). In this study, I had four assumptions. First, I assumed that the nonprofit senior leaders in the study would answer the interview questions honestly. Second, I assumed that the single-case study design would be the most appropriate for this study. Third, I assumed that the sample size of three nonprofit senior leaders from a single NPO in the Northeastern United States would be adequate to answer the research question for this study. Last, I assumed that using the 2019-2020 Baldrige Performance Excellence Program criteria would provide a useful perspective for answering the research question.

### **Limitations**

Limitations refer to shortcomings, conditions, or uncontrollable forces during a qualitative study that place restrictions on the methodology and conclusions of the study (Visscher et al., 2017). There are several limitations to the study. The first limitation is that using a single-case study design may have decreased the generalizability of results because of the small sample size of three nonprofit senior leaders from a single NPO in the Northeast United States. Second, the ability of nonprofit senior leader participants to recall experiences from the past may have limited the depth of information collected. Third, limiting the population to three senior leaders of a single NPO in the Northeastern United States who used successful strategies to retain donors for their organizations restricted the breadth of perspectives and experiences shared. Fourth, my skills as an interviewer may have limited the information I was able to collect from participants. The final limitation is that participants may not have been forthcoming when answering certain questions (e.g., regarding financial information or business failure).

## **Delimitations**

Delimitations clarify the scope of a study and indicate the areas included and excluded in the design (Papagiannis, Triantafyllou, Roumpelakis, Papagelopoulos, & Babis, 2018). The delimitation of this study is an essential consideration to scope and aspects of the research for NPO to exploit the psychological characteristics of prospective donors (Lee, Fraser, & Fillis, 2017). The second delimitation of this study was the selection of a population and sample size of three senior leaders of a single NPO in the Northeast United States. This research was dependent upon reliable and accurate data from the senior leader participants. The final delimitation of this study was the exclusion of data related to strategies for retaining donors from other leaders within the client organization who were not part of the sample selection.

## **Significance of the Study**

The study findings may contribute to the effective practice of business by clarifying the causes that prevent donors from donating to NPOs. Mishra (2019) argued that effective business practices involve leaders cultivating strong will power, commitment, and dedication to ensure successful outcomes. Professionals and practitioners may be able to use or adapt the results of this study to improve processes for retaining donors and to decrease the probability of business failure.

## **Contribution to Business Practice**

This study may further understanding of potential strategies that NPO leaders can use to retain donors thereby improving desirable income sources such as donations to continue to serve their communities, ensure growth, and sustainability. Shen (2016)

determined that nonprofit executives need to know how donors will lapse in fulfilling future commitments within the first year of acquisition. Perhaps if more data and information were made available on the practical strategies used by nonprofit leaders, then leaders would be better able to obtain donations to continue to serve their communities effectively. The study findings may contribute to the effective practice of business by clarifying causes that prevent donors from donating to NPOs.

### **Implications for Social Change**

The results of this study may also contribute to positive social change. The study may help nonprofit leaders to identify strategies to improve donations, thereby helping leaders to engage in programs and activities designed to help them acquire and develop leadership skills. Using these practices may improve their organizations' ability to retain donors to meet the needs of their communities. The findings of this study may allow NPO leaders to resolve their growth and sustainability challenges beyond the 5-year window of concern to achieve their missions. Thus, nonprofit senior leaders who develop innovative strategies may provide a positive influence and improve their organization's ability to serve and improve their local communities with employment opportunities.

### **A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature**

The purpose of the literature review is to explore the strategies that nonprofit leaders used to retain donors for their organizations. I used a qualitative single case study to study one NPO in the Northeastern United States. Developing and retaining donors is a challenge for nonprofit leaders (Drollinger, 2018). The transformational leadership theory and was the conceptual framework lenses for this study. Burns (1978) and Zapata Cantu

and Mondragon (2016) stated that the sustainability of NPOs must encompass the concept of maintaining donors and formulating management processes of funding. However, Stewart (2016) and LeRoux and Langer (2016) expressed the different view that board behavior often falls short because nonprofit boards of directors exist to perform mission-setting and oversight functions that help to ensure organizational accountability and executive turnover.

Moreover, LeRoux and Langer (2016) noted that often, there is a more significant disconnect between board members' behavior and executive directors' preferences for involvement in mission-setting and oversight duties. To this end, nonprofit leaders must work to ensure that these differences do not impact performances and overall mission. Furthermore, Kim, Oh, and Park (2018) posited that different types of nonprofits utilize performance appraisal systems to improve their accountability and demonstrate organizational trustworthiness through change management. Schlosser, McPhee, and Forsyth (2017) provided nonprofits executives with insights into nonprofit leadership and opportunities for human resource professionals to help towards successful nonprofit leadership change. These include creating opportunities for “chance events” that motivate transition, followed by career coaching opportunities before and throughout development (Schlosser et al., 2017).

Burns (1978) defined transformational leadership theory as a leadership approach that causes a change in individuals and social systems. I used the leadership theory as a lens for exploring strategies to retain donors for their organizations. I did so because understanding how nonprofit leaders develop and implement strategies to retain donors



may assist NPO leaders in building donor relationships that align with the NPO's unique needs, values, projections, objectives and fundraising style (Drollinger, 2018). Nonprofit leaders face the challenge of making followers transcend their self-interest for company benefits (Effelsberg, Solga, & Gurt, 2014). Effelsberg et al. concluded that leaders should retain donors and use adequate funding to support innovation, execution of strategies, and community advancement.

Shen (2016) determined that nonprofit executives need to know whether donors will lapse by future commitments within the first year of acquisition. Shen further noted that if individuals donate more than one gift in the first year, they are 39% more likely to give in subsequent years, as compared to one-time gifts. Furthermore, Palumbo (2016) posited that the success factor for leaders on the behaviors of followers is likely to constrain rather than to empower followers, discouraging their organizational commitment. Followers could become reliant and adopt proactive behaviors to meet organizational needs.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

I used the following key words to guide my database searches: *transformational leadership theory; leadership styles; organizational culture, leadership and management; leadership traits and sustainability; active fundraising; charitable giving; donor behaviors; donors' willingness to donate; intrinsic motivation to donate; fundraising activities; and nonprofit growth and sustainability*. Search results included trade publications, books, non-peer-reviewed articles, and primarily peer-reviewed journals and articles. My search strategy focused on exploring databases accessible through the

Walden University Library, including its ScholarWorks repository of dissertations and database offerings from vendors such as EBSCOhost and ProQuest; Google Scholar; and government databases. I used ProQuest, which is a research and information company, Academic Source Complete, Business Source Complete, and Sage Premier databases to conduct searches of relevant peer-reviewed journals published between 2014 and 2019. Of the overall 217 distinctive sources referenced in the literature review, 213 (98% of the sources cited) are recent (i.e., sources published from 2015 to 2019), with 209 of these sources being peer-reviewed research articles (see Table 1). Five articles and three books were published within the 5-year time frame of the literature review. There were four academic books cited in the literature review and two dissertations. Also, 98% of the 217 total sources were from peer-reviewed journals.

Table 1

*Literature Review Sources*

Literature review	Total	# within 5-year range (2015-2019)	% peer-reviewed within 5-year range (2015-2019)
Books	4	4	100%
Peer-reviewed articles	209	205	98%
Dissertations	2	2	100%
Online resources	2	2	100%
Total	217	213	98%

I used the purpose statement and research question to help define the focus and scope of this literature review. The findings of the review provide understanding for future studies as well as for the design of nonprofit leaders' strategies for retaining donors. The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore the strategies for retaining donors that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations.

The target population was three executive leaders of a Northeastern United States NPO who had implemented strategies to retain donors for their organizations. The implications for positive social change include the opportunity to generate adequate funding to support innovation, execution of strategies, and community advancement. Study findings may offer strategies that leaders can use to retain and engage prospective donors and sustain and grow their NPOs.

### **Informed Consent**

As a requirement of Walden University and as part of my ethical responsibility, I obtained informed consent from the participants of the study before conducting research. In conducting ethical research involving human subjects, informed consent is a widely accepted legal, ethical, and regulatory requirement and is thus important to avoid ethical missteps (Dekas & McCune, 2015; Stang, 2015). Morse, Roberts, MacIntosh, and Bordone (2018) identified ethical issues associated with conducting qualitative research within communities and concluded that obtaining informed consent is not always an easy task (e.g., because participant responses may be traceable and often are sensitive, both of which can affect the quality of data obtained). Researchers, therefore, must not only involve participants in their study but also convey to them their rights as human subjects and discuss the methodological and scientific aspects of the research as well as its moral and ethical communicative aspects and the potential harms and benefits (Perminov, 2017; Shokraneh & Adams, 2017).

Gaining informed consent is a legally mandated requirement for qualitative business research in the United States (Griffiths, 2014). Griffiths stated that whether or

not a consumer gives informed consent makes the role of the researcher becoming critical and further ensures the trustworthiness of the service representative. Also, Foe and Larson (2016) expressed that researchers can conduct further research using standardized tools to determine the best approach for improving consent forms and processes. To this end, informed consent enhances transparency in research involving vulnerability and trust concerns of participants (Foe & Larson, 2016; Griffiths, 2014).

Annas (2017) addressed issues and concerns relating to ethical and legal aspects of informed consent doctrine involving patients' right to refuse medical treatment and physicians' relationships along with institutional review boards (IRBs). Most academic institutions such as Walden University have ethics committees, often called IRBs, that review researchers' use of humans as research subjects and seek to protect research participants (Abdool, 2017; Blackwood et al., 2015). Blackwood et al. (2015) conducted one of the first studies to examine the nature of IRB contingencies as it relates to informed consent documents. Blackwood et al. in association with the University of Michigan Human Research Protection Program, formed a six-member committee to analyze the nature of IRB staff and board contingencies for the approval of informed consent documents at the university. Of the 100 studies examined, 87% had one or more informed consent contingencies, and 40% accounted for omissions in the documentation, while "better clarity" represented 24% and "forming words" accounted for only 10% (Blackwood et al., 2015). Blackwood et al. as well as Leedy and Ormrod (2013), argued that informed consent is a significant part of a patient's rights, and hospitals are required to obtain informed consent before any diagnostic or therapeutic procedures.

It is the responsibility of the IRB to review research proposals to help ensure ethical research protocols and informed consent before the start of any human involvement in the research. Therefore, before researching this study, I submitted my research request to Walden IRB (Walden University, 2017b), which ensured compliance with federal regulations as well as the University's requirements. Before collecting data, I obtained IRB approval (approval no. 05-23-17-0662665). To further ensure the availability of the protected data for 5 years, I managed a backup of all data files to a personal cloud storage device on my home network, limited to my access and use only.

### **Transformational Leadership Theory**

Burns' (1978) established the framework for TLT. According to Burns, transforming leadership is the process in which leaders and followers help one another to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation. In considering the difference between leadership and management, Burns proposed that the differences are the behaviors and characteristics that leaders exhibit. Burns established two concepts, namely transactional leadership and transformational leadership. The transforming leadership approach creates change in the life of followers and the organization in a remarkable way in the sense that the approach redesigns perceptions and values while changing the values and aspirations of employees (Burns, 1978). However, the transactional leadership theory is about the leader's personality, ability to make changes and manage challenges, and level of vision and energizing sense of direction (Burns, 1978). Unlike the transactional leadership theory which identifies the leader's traits, transformational leadership centers on the benefit of the team, organization, and community (Burns, 1978). Thus, according to

Burns, transforming leaders can potentially work to change the organizational culture whereas transactional leaders instead do not strive for cultural change in the organizations but work in the existing culture at their disposal.

Bass (1985) expanded on the work of Burns (1978) by adding to the initial concepts of transformational and transactional leadership theories to help demonstrate how transformational leadership can impact followers in terms of motivation and performance. Bass noted that followers of such leaders feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect because of the qualities of the transformational leader who is always willing to work harder than everyone. The leader can use traits including influence, special consideration, and intellectual stimulation to transform and motivate followers to be innovative and come up with unique ideas to make the organization successful within the community. However, in contrast to Burns, Bass also suggested that leaders can demonstrate the traits of both transformational and transactional qualities for the good of the organization and the community. Leaders of NPOs must, therefore, identify organizational elements that enable the nonprofit to generate and transfer knowledge (Zapata Cantu & Mondragon, 2016). To this end, Zapata Cantu and Mondragon (2016) proposed concepts to help nonprofit leaders maintain donors and formulate management processes of funding using leadership traits.

In this study, I used TLT as the framework to explore how nonprofit leaders use strategies to retain donors for their organizations. An understanding of the TLT can help nonprofit leaders to ensure the sustainability of their organization and its programs through a higher level of morale and motivation (Burns, 1978). An understanding of

sustainability may allow senior leaders of NPOs the opportunity to use their leadership style to develop strategies for retaining donors (see Burns, 1978).

### **Other Contrasting Theories**

The contrasting theories that I used were transactional leadership theory, visionary leadership, and participative leadership theory. Each of these theories offers different perspectives that may be of use to the nonprofit senior leaders of BCD (pseudonym), my client organization. I conducted a comprehensive review of the academic and professional literature to gain insight on each of the contrasting theories.

**Transactional leadership theory.** Transactional leadership theory offers a conflicting theory to Bass's (1985) and Burns's (1978) leadership theories. The term *transactional* refers to a transactional leader who motivates subordinates by exchanging rewards for performance (Parr, Lanza, & Bernthal, 2016). Thus, a leader who practices transactional leadership is making confident decisions and expecting positive results (Parr et al., 2016).

Transactional leaders use disciplinary power and incentives to motivate employees to perform at their best, thus making transactional leadership a form of traditional leadership style (Antonakis & House, 2014). A transactional leader generally does not look ahead in strategically guiding an organization to a position of leadership; rather, transactional leaders are solely concerned with making sure everything flows smoothly daily with clarity for success (Ebrahimi Mehrabani & Azmi Mohamad, 2015). Nonprofit leaders could choose to improve the organization's approach to leadership and a style that aligns with the organization's aims and objectives to be successful.

Current leadership theories center on transformational and transactional types of leadership (Teoman & Ulengin, 2018). Unlike transformational and transactional leadership, Hu et al. (2016) proposed that transactional or task-focused leaders often achieve minimum standards and that transformational or team-oriented leaders inspire performance beyond expectations. Similar to how transactional leadership is associated with the task, transformational leadership is associated with improved team behavior (Hu et al., 2016). The transactional theory also focuses on a transparent chain of command where the leader motivates his or her subordinates by presenting them rewards and, where necessary, reprimands or punishments. Antonakis and House (2014) noted that transactional leaders scan the internal and external environment, chart strategic and task objectives, and provide performance feedback. However, if subordinates fail to satisfy requirements for performance, corresponding reprimands follow (Antonakis & House, 2014).

Unlike transactional leadership, leaders who demonstrate transformational leadership styles also tend to identify and measure performance standards by rewarding, inspiring, motivating and equipping people for the good and best interest of the organization. Thus, with most modern businesses, when employees are successful, they get rewards and vice versa. Nonprofit leaders should consider how to engage subordinates to become effective leaders in a dynamic business environment and become more productive and successful with the implementation of these leadership theories and approaches to retaining donors for their organizations.

**Visionary leadership theory.** Researchers use visionary leadership to include



collectively moving groups in a specific tangible or intangible direction. Unlike transformational and transactional leaders, if the visionary leaders do not give specific directions to followers, then the visionary leader ends up misleading the followers. Not all nonprofit leaders are visionary leaders. However, nonprofit leaders need to have a clear vision. The word vision may have different interpretations. However, Kotter (2009) defined vision as a picture of the future with some implicit or explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future.

Kotter also expressed that vision is the ability of a leader to envisage the future while aligning the team with that vision and then inspiring team members to achieve the desired goals concerning that vision. King, Hopkins, and Cornish (2017) advanced on Kotter's (2009) vision of organizational change to develop strategies for encouraging organizational leaders. Just like Hu et al. (2016), King et al. also found that leaders' use of organizational change helps to engage followers to participate in activities that inspire performance beyond expectations. Likewise, Doucet, Lapalme, Simard, and Tremblay (2015) proposed the moderating role of high-involvement management practices on the relationship between managers' transformational leadership and employees' affective organizational commitment. The approach of Doucet et al. combined the visionary, transformational, and transactional dimensions of leadership theories into a single practicable leadership theory that draws upon findings from both past and recent leadership research.

Furthermore, information sharing and power-sharing practices by leaders who acted as leadership enhancers help in the development of practical skills to engage

followers to participate in activities (Doucet et al., 2015). Hu et al. (2016) noted that leadership is a well-characterized construct. From the above statement, and as I stand on the shoulders of other scholars, who have argued other leadership theories such as the traditional, behavioral, situational, transactional, transformational and visionary models over the years, these leadership styles have all been successful in the past in guiding managers on how to develop, motivate and inspire fellow associates for excelling performance. However, Doucet et al. (2015) and Spike (2017) have expressed that combined with transformational and transactional leadership, new organizations have become increasingly complex and providing strategic directions for innovation, bridging the boundary with customers and facilitating the development of new products. Nonprofit organizational leaders are now becoming strategically responsive building partnerships with advanced business networks of highly empowered teams of knowledgeable workers. These complex networks make it difficult for any one of the above leadership theories to singularly address the challenge of providing strategic guidance to team managers, particularly in today's dynamic global business environment. Hence, nonprofit leaders having clear visions, ideas, and or concepts, will be appropriate strategies to retain donors for their organizations.

**Participative leadership.** Participative leadership has an overwhelming advantage over the contrasting and conflicting styles of directive leadership for organizational and team effectiveness. The effect of a directive leadership approach, as compared with a participative leadership approach, helps with team's empowerment and organizational commitment as well as effectiveness within the team in-role performance

and team innovation (Banjarnahor, Hutabarat, Sibuea, & Situmorang, 2018; Bouwmans, Runhaar, Wesselink, & Mulder, 2017). Leaders with organizational commitment serve as mediators in the directive leadership-performance relationship.

Chen, Cheng, and Sato (2017) found a positive relationship between participative leadership and leaders' empowerment. Chen et al. also found that implementing diverse leadership through a team approach serves a positive relation that facilitates employees' professionalism and commitment. Also, leaders' empowerment served as a mediator and correlated in the participative leadership-innovation relationship (Chen et al., 2017).

Above all, Chen et al. (2017) concluded that managing tensions between the participative and directive leadership styles, meet the needs of a bottom-up and a top-down process respectively. Hence, flexibility and discipline in leadership styles can provide the key to high performance as it relates to funding strategies that nonprofit leaders use to retain donors for their organizations. Further conflicting data within this conceptual research framework affects leadership styles in organizations and team effectiveness as well as leaders' approach within groups (Chen et al., 2017).

### **Leadership Styles and Organizational Culture**

A leader undertakes and inspires significant cultural change. To be a global positive social change agent, leaders must infuse current leadership styles that require a supportive culture to enable successful change management (Ugoani, 2017). Leadership roles in NPOs enhance change management that involves the ability to communicate, influence, and collaborate strategic and financial accomplishment, to gain insight into strategies to retain donors for their organizations (Ugoani, 2017). Leaders can use

communication tools, such as internal memos or voice mail memos, bulletins, newsletters, focus groups, forums, brainstorming sessions, meetings, training tapes, multimedia presentations, performance rewards, classes, and wide circulation of specific information, particularly articles, to enable successful cultural changes. Each of the above communication tools represents a necessary step in managing change to gain insight into strategies to retain donors for NPOs. Nonprofit leaders must engage employees with different cultural backgrounds and with different personalities to meet the specific needs of the organization to retain donors. To provide continuous training that ensures that different cultures enhance organizational diversity, nonprofit leaders can implement the above communication tools (Nel, Alewyn, Adams, & De Beer, 2015). Thus, leaders must make management commitment clear to employees as to why cultural change is necessary for growth, sustainability, and more importantly retaining donors.

**Leadership and management.** In this evolution and evaluation of leadership, Northouse (2016) stated that there are still endless debates about leadership, but whether leadership and management are separate processes depends on the emerging research in the 21st century. Northouse emphasized that leadership is a process that individuals use to achieve common goals by influencing a group of individuals to focus on what leaders do as opposed to who leaders are. The individual leader influences others as opposed to developing new ways of defining leadership. Among the leadership approaches well noted by Northouse (2016) are authentic leadership, in which Northouse expressed the authenticity of leaders and their leadership styles. Northouse also noted spiritual leadership, which focuses on leadership that utilizes values and a sense of calling and

membership to motivate followers.

Servant leadership, which puts the leader in the role of a servant, who utilizes caring principles to focus on followers' needs to help these followers become more autonomous, knowledgeable, and as servants themselves; and adaptive leadership, in which leaders encourage followers to adapt by confronting and solving problems, challenges, and changes (Northouse, 2016). Thus, leaders end up motivating their followers to accomplish the best results and implementing strategies to retain donors for their organizations.

### **Nonprofit Leadership Traits and Sustainability**

The success of every single largest NPO is its financial sustainability. However, to determine the success of nonprofit finance, multiple disciplines creates barriers for new researchers to the field. Schatteman and Waymire (2017), addressed issues of NPO success and financial sustainability and how this impacts the community that the nonprofit operates in. Schatteman and Waymire (2017) expressed that across disciplines, there is an emphasis on determinants of giving. However, there is some variation; for example, there is more emphasis on government funding in journals outside of nonprofit management.

Indeed, NPOs throughout the United States struggle to engage and manage financial volunteers or donors effectively. However, York (2017) proposed leaders who manage finances well, experience net benefits concerning cost savings, increased public support, and enhanced quality of and capacity to deliver services. Also, nonprofits that manage and engage donors well are more cost-efficient, as well as significantly better

led, better executed, and more adaptable to exigent changes (York, 2017). Hence, to address NPO financial sustainability, nonprofit senior leaders can be prepared financially through targeted consulting and training. Nonprofit leaders thus need to monitor key performance areas to improve the chances of sustainability and to provide early warnings of managerial and operational problems in harsh fundraising environments. To this end, Medina-Borja and Triantis (2014) found that assessing multiple performance dimensions may not be the only thing that nonprofits executive need to focus on but that efficient fundraising is not a guarantee for efficient and high-quality service delivery, nor it is a guarantee of client outcome achievement or effectiveness its financial sustainability. Therefore, leaders are to establish an excellent form of company-wide communication strategies and capacity building and use it to determine the success of nonprofit finance.

Innovation plays a critical role in effective strategic sustainable management. Nonprofit senior leaders need to be developing a culture of shared leadership to enhance an organization's resilience and adaptability and help ensure its ability to navigate turbulence and uncertainty to maintain the success of nonprofit financial sustainability (Routhieaux, 2015). Routhieaux noted that leadership could provide a foundation for NPO sustainability because shared leadership ultimately enables NPOs to navigate current and future trends more effectively. Also, nonprofit senior leaders benefit from organizational sustainability as they manage with new knowledge of ideas and practices that brings expand the business. Similarly, Lopes, Scavarda, Hofmeister, Thomé, and Vaccaro (2017) expressed that through open innovation, companies can leverage knowledge management to an asset that promotes sustainable innovations.

Furthermore, the nonprofit executive needs to understand that the success of management practices is at the heart of most organizations' sustainability efforts. Leaders need to appreciate the fact that the importance of values for the design and implementation of such practices, analyzes how human values, particularly ethical values, relate to human resource management practices in organizations. Guerci, Radaelli, Siletti, Cirella, and Rami Shani (2015) noted motivation-enhancing strategies such as ability-enhancing, recruiting, selection, training, and opportunity-enhancing practices that support effective human resource practices in organizations. Guerci et al. (2015) expressed that this set of distinct values has corporate sustainability implications, global relevance, and ethical climate significance for planning and implementing effective management practices and organizational financial sustainability.

### **Organizing Active Fundraising**

Building a relationship with a significant gift donor is an essential form of fundraising for nonprofits. Active fundraising is a process where organizations or institutions utilize communication strategies, tactics, objectives, case, and needs in their entirety or a campaign of the time frame and specific funding opportunities to raise funds and encourage donations (Drollinger, 2018; Jameson, 2017). Fundraising is a means to an end rather than the end in itself and that nonprofit leaders view greatness as the kind of fundraising that results in transformation for the organization and, ultimately, the organization's impact on society (Sargeant & Shang, 2016). Fundraisers according to Drollinger (2018), become relationship managers tasked with building trust and developing mutual goals with the donor through effective communication. Drollinger

explored the importance of active listening on the fundraiser's part by emphasizing active empathic listening (AEL) based on the strategies of nonprofit senior leaders. These leaders need to adopt the AEL method to help fundraisers in their efforts to connect in a meaningful way with major donors. To this end, senior leaders of NPOs need to train and encourage fundraisers to work with more accurate information regarding the donor's motivations, interests, and desires as well as instill a sense of trust and genuineness between both parties. Chengyu (2018) noted that having combining language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing more economically and effectively can help fundraisers and subsequently impact donors to give generously.

Nonprofit senior leaders who engages in active listening and collaboration surpass other passive listening leaders and offers a deeper connection between speaker and listener, because the listener gives the speaker full attention via inquiry, reflection, respect, and empathy (Eberhardt & Heinz, 2017; Spataro & Bloch, 2018). Hence, leaders who possess active listening skills can help fundraisers make more impact on NPOs.

Sargeant and Shang (2016) explored the impact on donor behaviors and determined that successful nonprofit leaders define greatness as the ability to accomplish mission objectives rather than to achieve growth. The authors suggested that successful nonprofit leaders passionately embraced fundraising and devoted themselves entirely to their nonprofits' causes. Interview participants had been successful managers before their current positions; understood both the short and long-term impact of fundraising for their organizations; had developed a learning culture in which fundraising was at the core and had experience in building strong teams and developing useful organizational structures



with clear delineation of tasks.

Organizational leaders should consider focusing on the development and performance of leadership skills to include active listening skills. Farrell (2016) noted that nonprofit senior leaders must encourage and train temporary leaders, with limited information and serving in an acting role for a short period or serving as an interim leader to become active listeners. Potential lessons from practicing collaborative and active listening skills can help organizational leaders who seek to implement such AELs to improve fundraising. It is therefore essential for organizational leaders not only to study language skills but also to review research that considers the impact language skills have on NPO's effectiveness thereby making this a positive experience by encouraging the practice of active listening skills, ultimately providing smooth transitions for an organization.

Farrell (2016) indicated that nonprofit leaders can project the impact of donors' behaviors towards funding and how to retain donors for the benefit of charitable organizations. Therefore, organizing different fundraising activities geared towards donation-matching can go a long way to raise additional donations for struggling charities and to support the contention that other experimental designs may not be appropriate for this qualitative research study.

**Nonprofit leaders' fundraising strategies.** Leaders of NPOs organize fundraising to attain a campaign goal: a fundraising program, including objectives, case, leadership requirements, timetable, personnel requirements, and budget; and the overall strategy or grand design for the successful implementation of a campaign. Drezner (2018)

developed a philanthropic mirroring framework for nonprofit senior leaders that shows engagement with donors increases social identity and as a result mirrored in solicitation efforts while building long-term relationships. Drezner conducted research using his population-based survey experiment, the National Alumni Giving Experiment and found that respondents who shared at least one marginalized social identity with students profiled in fundraising solicitations are more likely than others to assign more importance to the cause and to give more significant amounts.

Woronkowicz and Nicholson-Crotty (2017) gathered information on the effects of campaigns on the fundraising performance of nonprofits within the same geographic region. Woronkowicz and Nicholson-Crotty's research indicated that nonprofit leaders might consider using charitable giving by donors to carefully circumscribe organizational mission through effective campaigns to raise awareness of the need for services within a particular area. Describing the experiences of nonprofit leaders, Woronkowicz and Nicholson-Crotty's (2017) indicated that data on capital campaigns at NPOs in forty-eight counties across the United States between 1999 and 2007, coupled with financial data on nonprofits, show that a significant capital campaign positively affects other nonprofits' fundraising, and the effect varies depending on the phase of the capital campaign. Focusing on nonprofit leaders' funding strategies, leaders must seek help from scholars, to identify strategies to secure sustainable funding sources (Hardy, 2017). Thus, to improve funding, or prevent or reverse losses of funding to their organizations, nonprofit senior leaders need to develop and monitor strategies that account for business growth, retain donors, and change over time.

**Active fundraising and social media.** Different advertising strategies bring different donor behavior and consumers with growth mindsets to the extent that when charitable organizations advertise through social media, the adverts motivate donors to give either time or money for the economic viability of the charity (Hsieh & Yucel-Aybat, 2018; Kim et al., 2018). Senior leaders of NPOs should act more efficiently in strategizing to a target donor group to generate intentions to donate either money or time because some types of appeal motivate donors to give (Hsieh & Yucel-Aybat, 2018). Kim et al. used this research to show that age could be particularly influential when donors choose what resources to donate when leaders promote fundraising through social media. Li, He, Song, Yang, and Zhou (2018) found that using social media to generate online donations for charitable projects is becoming more critical for human service nonprofits. The reason is that social media is allowing leaders of nonprofits to reach a broader target population of donors at a relatively little cost which hitherto challenging to achieve. Like Li et al. (2018), Alhidari, Veludo-de-Oliveira, Yousafzai, and Yani-de-Soriano (2018) identified that to prioritize beneficiaries' rights, trust, attitude towards the advertisement, and feelings from the advertisement are essential predictors of charitable social media donation intentions.

Kugler (2016) provided insights about the role of mobile application (app) development in social change to reach young adulthood at the turn of the Century and to a new generation of app makers who are busy building programs that make it easy and fun to do massive good around the world. The author noted that if leaders involve mobile apps in charitable giving, the impact of the charity Lunchbox Fund in feeding needy

children in South Africa, and the relation of smartphone user practices to such mobile apps will help to provide monetary support. Also, Kugler (2016) suggested that the apps help to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless, all with a tap of that little screen typically reserved for Angry Birds or Amazon purchases. The author allowed people to impact someone in need just by doing what they are already doing.

Kugler (2016) proposed leaders that used the app to share photos of other charitable organizations participating in meals to feed the hungry, and other restaurants that made donations to The Lunchbox Fund to feed hungry children motivated donors to continue to donate. Kugler (2016) demonstrated that the use of social apps used by charitable organizations succeed because they are a win-win-win for charitable organizations, users or donors, and participating businesses. Kugler argued that useful social apps of any type are the ones that create the most significant impact are the people who help others do well while doing good because the best social useful apps leverage consumer behavior to create real change.

Charitable giving cannot only become widespread on mobile devices; it can become second nature if done right, just like opening Facebook or checking Snapchat. Kugler (2016) also expressed that Smartphone Apps for Social Good is an added financial benefit for consumers because users can claim many types of charitable donations as tax deductions. Kugler (2016) concluded that people experience the opportunity to impact someone in need just by doing what they are already doing.

Similarly, students and retired individuals have more free time and might prefer volunteering. Also, certain types of natural personalities influence the kind of resources

that donors are willing to donate and that senior leaders of NPOs who seek to improve on funding activities could use these strategies to gather inputs from donors and key stakeholders in developing ongoing strategic funding through social media. Recognizing donors by revealing their identity increases contributions to public goods and donations to charitable organizations (Samek & Sheremeta, 2017). Nonprofits generate revenue from a variety of sources and that promotion of young talents positively influences the reception of donations (Wicker, Longley, & Breuer, 2015).

Jung (2015) and Grant and Potoski (2015) advocated that general relationship-based fundraising practices and a corporate reputation among groups of nonprofits performing similar functions help to build relationships with local community members thereby influencing senior leaders of NPOs to include such perspectives on fundraising practices. Jones (2016) expressed that positive stories by charitable organizations that go viral on social media help the nonprofits to generate revenue dramatically because it allows the nonprofit to engage with the donors while enhancing the reputation of the NPO. Similarly, Ngai and Singh (2018) found that NPOs overwhelmingly prefer to use their website to cultivate positive relationships with their stakeholders with stewardship strategies as donors embrace social media.

To improve online and social media funding activities for leaders of NPOs, organizational best practices such as cultural and generational differences are vital strategic inputs (Dwyer & Azevedo, 2016; Jung, 2015). Nonprofit leaders can utilize innovative and diverse fundraising methods in retaining donors for their organizations through social media. Feng, Du, and Ling (2017) demonstrated how the role of

consumers' donations using social media strategies could impact perceived trust and satisfaction on consumers' donation intention and electronic word-of-mouth. Feng et al. (2017) used the online survey completed by 242 followers of the One NPO on social media, and the results showed that both dissemination and interactivity had a significantly positive effect on consumers' perceived trust and satisfaction, which subsequently influenced their donation intention, and electronic word-of-mouth.

Indeed, the senior leaders of NPOs can benefit from the use of social media. Erwin and Dias (2016) suggested that the utilization of the Internet for fundraising by NPOs generates growth and sustainable revenue because of the marketing with the social media community. Just like Erwin and Dias, Young (2017) also expressed that the adoption and utilization of social media help primarily to promote NPO and services, and despite limited resources, the NPOs can plan to continue to use social media in the future to improve upon services to the needy.

From a different perspective, Marx and Carter (2014) provided a more comprehensive and in-depth examination of the growing influence of computer ownership and online technologies (including social media) on charitable giving and that senior leaders of nonprofits must focus mainly on the characteristics and preferences of wealthy online donors concerning combined purpose organizations and other human services. Thus, if charities are to survive, nonprofit leaders seeking funds from individual donors will have to update fundraising choices and refine both the quality and targeting of their fundraising campaigns. When the adverts show that more people are receiving help, then donors become motivated to give of time and money for the sustainability of

the NPO.

**Media and donor trust.** The rise of social media as a marketing channel brings open questions as to its impact on actual brand performance. Fay and Larkin (2017) examined the relationship between social media and real-world conversations and outcomes for brands using four key metrics namely; volume, sentiment, sharing, and influence to study the potential connections. Fay and Larkin further promoted the need for nonprofit leaders to develop separate digital and offline social influence strategies to enhance interaction with donors and stakeholders. Also, Lowry, Moody, and Chatterjee (2017) proposed that business leaders need to develop social media networks that are safe, supportive, responsible, and constructive.

Likewise, Adena (2016) explored the incentives and behavior of NPOs and expressed how the media can enhance the trust of donors and increases the level of donations and the amount of public good. Leaders of NPOs enter the market with a free ride on donor trust because NPOs solicit donations from individuals and in turn offer goods and services that donors cannot readily ascertain their quality (Adena, 2016). Adena's (2016) proposed that senior leaders of NPOs implement strategies focused on identifying the performance-enhancing role of the media in the economy by highlighting the importance of media competition and freedom. Adena used the incentives and behavior of nonprofit leaders to measure the performance competitiveness of the media market and media freedom as it relates to the level of donations and impact on the public. Adena further included strategies for nonprofit senior leaders to understand how the media engages in contests, which with some probability, will lead to detecting dishonest

and fraudulent types of NPOs and in turn, reducing their entry probability and increase donor trust and charitable giving.

**Fundraising choices.** The successful distribution of business funds creates the foundation for the development of new products and services and reformulation of management strategies (Jarosławska-Sobór, 2015). Donors' choice of funding increases leaders of NPOs' financial ability to assist in communities (Chan-on & Sarwal, 2017). Individual funding choices, sources of funding, and innovation affect the senior leaders of NPOs' empowerment (Méndez-Morales, 2019). Carey, Malbon, Reeders, Kavanagh, and Llewellyn (2017) noted that the Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) assesses the needy with paid support and will allocate funding packages to people with disability.

Donors funding aims to increase opportunities for personal choice. Carey et al. (2017) used two policy dimensions that potentially enable more excellent personal choice for people with disabilities. Carey et al. noted that while individual funding choice is empowering for some people with disability, enabling choice can be challenging for administrators and service providers and that senior leaders of NPOs need to create and develop new products and innovative services for donors and in doing so, retain donors for their organizations.

**Corporate charitable contributions.** Developing strategies for improvement helps leaders of NPOs to identify whether the strategical use of corporate giving enhances corporate financial reputation and performance (Choong-Yuel & Jinhan, 2016). Choong-Yuel and Jinhan (2016) found out that growth in corporate charitable



contributions is associated with subsequent revenue growth, suggesting that corporate philanthropy is also financially justified. The authors' demonstrated that corporate giving practices of Korean companies are not significantly different from those in other countries that senior leaders of nonprofits organizations can potentially learn from such practices.

Choong-Yuel and Jinhan (2016) proposed that organizations implement strategies in identifying how nonprofit managers use corporate giving opportunistically for their benefits; that is, the diversion of corporate resources. Choong-Yuel and Jinhan (2016) highlighted how nonprofit senior leaders could determine strong corporate governance and the labor market are policing; however, sometimes this may inhibit managers' excessive use of corporate resources for special benefits. Also, this study included valuable insights for nonprofit senior leaders to identify that corporate giving is more likely to become detrimental to long-term firm value because the level of corporate giving is not determined to maximize firm value, but manager's benefits. Choong-Yuel and Jinhan (2016) identified actions to support nonprofit senior leaders' operational success of corporate giving which will equally help leaders of nonprofits organizations in understanding the effects of corporate charitable contributions and that the result of this study is consistent with the strategic use of corporate giving rather than the opportunistic use of corporate giving.

Similarly, Kwak and Kwon (2016) found out that a corporate charitable donation can prompt donors who closely identify with that body to give to the charity. In exploring the boundary conditions that moderate the organization identification, gratitude and

donation relationship, Kwak and Kwon proposed that the amount of an organization's donation can have a positive moderating effect on the organization-gratitude relationship. Kwak and Kwon argued further that a favorable evaluation of a corporation's charitable giving would positively moderate the gratitude of prosocial behavior that is the donation amount and attitude toward the charity.

Kwak and Kwon (2016) further provided nonprofit senior leaders with valuable strategies on how gratitude arises in the context of corporate social responsibility. Kwak and Kwon demonstrated the mediating role of perceived donation contribution in the relationship between organizational identification and appreciation. Kwak and Kwon identified how nonprofit managers could predict that the amount of a corporate donation can positively moderate the influence of organizational identification on charity-evoked feelings of gratitude, while attitude toward the organization's charity will positively moderate the gratitude donation relationship.

Leaders of NPOs that identify the benefits of the study by Kwak and Kwon (2016) should consider encouraging nonprofit senior leaders to implement these strategies because charitable giving encourages consumers to give to the community. Senior leaders of NPOs can use the results of this study to partner with other similarly situated nonprofits in understanding the powerful influence of organization identification on the construction of gratitude and its subsequent effect on benefiting the nonprofit through philanthropic giving. Organizational leaders can motivate corporate donors to engage in prosocial behavior to support another local charity within the community.

Senior leaders' of NPOs that engage in corporate social responsibility (CSR) do

so because consumers are willing to pay to the firm for the own good where a portion of profits goes to a charity (Palumbo, 2016). However, Palumbo found out that corporate charitable contributions can motivate senior leaders of nonprofits to donate a portion of profits towards the provision and support of a public good. The authors determined that consumers give more when the marginal valuation of contributions to the public good is high and when the nonprofit in the absence of donations has a high ratio of fixed costs to operating profits. Palumbo identified how each consumer to some extent views themselves as having a negligible impact on the provision of the public good with the purchase of the private good because many of these investments are inframarginal and there are no contributions until the firm covers its fixed costs. Palumbo (2016) also noted how senior leaders of nonprofits organizations might understand that consumers may obtain an additional benefit if their act of giving becomes public, but they only gain this advantage when they purchase the private good linked to proper public provision, not when they contribute directly.

Attig and Brockman (2017) identified the benefits of CSR initiatives in the sense that it creates value when senior leaders of NPOs are appropriately in line with residents' prosocial attitudes and that firms benefit from increased investment in CSR activities to match the societal expectations of local stakeholders. These authors conducted research and presented a set of strategic options that prosocial attitudes of residents play a significant role in determining a firm's corporate social responsibility (CSR) engagement. The strategic options proposed by Attig and Brockman is that nonprofit leaders are more likely to engage in CSR initiatives when their headquarters are in areas with sizeable

senior citizen populations where a significant fraction of the population makes charitable donations. Unlike Palumbo (2016) who found out that corporate charitable contributions can motivate senior leaders of nonprofits to donate, Attig and Brockman (2017) focused on how senior leaders of nonprofits organizations can benefit from a broader shareholder base with more active donors and investors, and thus reducing financing frictions. Furthermore, these authors' suggested ways to improve the cost of capital of local green firms, which in turn improves corporate performance for nonprofit leaders. Results of the study can help nonprofit senior leaders to maintain a competitive advantage to attract more donors as leaders recognize strategic CSR initiatives.

Mishra (2017) examined the effects of innovative firms' corporate social responsibility (CSR). Mishra (2017) focused on how nonprofit senior leaders can incorporate successful innovation and plan for success while seeking higher CSR performance post-innovation to develop valuable reputational resources and reduce capital constraints. Mishra developed strategies to help nonprofit leaders in identifying that more innovative firms demonstrate high CSR performance after a successful innovation, which increases the companies' innovation intensity. Mishra's research included funding strategies for nonprofit leaders in the sense that CSR investment is likely one of the charitable leaders' critical strategic devices for developing reputational resources and reducing capital constraints through transparency and stakeholder engagement. Nonprofit leaders should consider the benefits of incorporating CSR performance into their strategies by promoting social responsibility to enhance the valuation effect of any creative efforts.

**Nonprofit executive turnover.** Leaders of NPOs often experience executive turnover (Stewart, 2016). Stewart analyzed factors and dynamics that define nonprofit executive turnover from forty NPOs selected from a national random sample. Because of the study, Stewart confirmed that practical knowledge offers new insights relevant to the senior leaders of NPOs to implement strategies to reduce executive turnover. LeRoux and Langer (2016) found that board behavior often falls short given the fact that nonprofit boards of directors exist to perform mission-setting and oversight functions that help to ensure organizational accountability. LeRoux and Langer (2016) further expressed that there is a more significant disconnect between board behavior and executive directors' preferences for involvement in mission-setting and oversight duties and that senior leaders of NPOs must work together to ensure that these differences do not impact performances and overall mission.

From a different perspective, Kim et al. (2018) argued that different types of nonprofit leaders may be sensitive to different measures of performance. Many NPOs utilize performance appraisal systems to improve their accountability and demonstrate organizational trustworthiness (Kim et al., 2018). Kim et al. further noted that organizational performance has potential influences on compensation to leaders of NPOs when there is a disconnect between nonprofit senior leaders' behavior and executive directors' preferences.

**Charitable giving.** Potential donors to charitable organizations often give less when there is a higher risk that their donation will have less impact and vice versa because people feel good about themselves when they help others (Exley, 2016). Exley

(2016) demonstrated that people use the risk that their donation may have less than the desired impact as an excuse not to give. Exley (2016) suggested the need to control excuse-driven responses to risk from other responses to risk and to show that donors appear to use risk, regardless of whether it is charity risk or self-risk, as an excuse not to give while the charity risk results may be more similar to typical charitable giving decisions. Exley (2016) demonstrated how individuals might use lower charity performance metrics as excuses not to give. Nonprofit senior leaders who understand, trust, and appreciate charitable giving must help other NPOs to relate to other avenues for excuse-driven behavior in charitable giving (Exley, 2016).

Marx and Carter (2014) provided valuable insights (VI) into charitable giving during the great recession to agencies benefitting society's most vulnerable groups. The authors identified potential significant predictors in the dataset of U.S. charitable giving during the recession year of 2008 (Marx & Carter, 2014). Among the predictors were race, sex, income, volunteer experience, location of residence, age, household size, tax status, workplace giving options, household wealth, religious affiliation, education level, homeownership, employment status, marital status, and computer ownership. These factors influencing giving to different categories of a beneficiary may vary at each category of the human service agency. As a direct result and more specifically, the authors noted factors that influence U.S. charitable giving to organizations serving the needy, youth, international organizations, and giving to combined purpose organizations.

Marx and Carter (2014) concluded that, by incorporating administrative practice strategies regarding charitable giving, nonprofit leaders can create opportunities to inform

other business and professional leaders that their nonprofit agencies benefit significantly from charitable contributions. From a different perspective, Smith, Windmeijer, and Wright (2015) argued that leaders must not only look at purely horizontal (donor-to-donor) peer effects in giving because of the donations of their peers' influence donors to the context of individual online fundraising. Peer effects in charitable giving specifically affect how donors give and respond to donations made by others in their peer group. The authors explored the effect of other contributions and the nature of the peer effects by looking at the impact of large and small donations and changes in the mode and further provided alternative explanations of why donors might respond to their peers. The study shows that most donations come from the fundraiser's friends, family, and colleagues.

Smith et al. (2015) noted that past contributions by donors might alternatively signal to other donors how much it is socially appropriate for them to give and that donors observe the distribution of previous donations and use this to or update their beliefs about how much they should give. Smith et al. offered useful strategies about the inherent sociality of giving by providing new evidence on the importance of peer effects in charitable giving in the context of individual online fundraising. Smith et al. used the study of past contributions by donors to suggest that nonprofit senior leaders must recognize that large donations might potentially place pressure upwards on amounts given among donors who want to signal their wealth or generosity or the closeness of their relationship with the fund-raiser by being among the most prominent donors.

Unlike Marx and Carter (2014) who provided VI into charitable giving, Smith et al. (2015) concluded that large donations might also provide nonprofit senior leaders a

signal about the quality of the charity. Furthermore, an individuals' beliefs about how much it is appropriate to give, assuming such beliefs are because of the observed distribution of amounts donors contribute, also affect the quality of giving. In the end, some donors will want to get away with giving as little as possible, and a small donation will allow them to reduce how much they give. Therefore, nonprofit leaders should implement strategies that enhance large donations by donors to charitable organizations to fulfill missions, visions, and values within the community.

### **Donor Behaviors in Regard to Charitable Organizations**

**Donors' willingness to donate.** The more people donate to disaster relief following a natural catastrophe, the more likely donors will give more, rather than less, to charity in the future. Sargeant and Shang (2016) explored nonprofit best practices to assess the impact on donor behaviors. Sargeant and Shang further noted that successful nonprofit leaders defined greatness as the ability to accomplish mission objectives rather than to achieve growth. Likewise, Ek (2017) mentioned that the effect of donor behavior could also run in the other direction in the sense that when contributing to charity by participating in a real-effort task, followed by a disaster, charities find that those who provide relatively little in the initial periods become extraordinarily generous in the future. Michaelidou, Micevski, and Cadogan (2015) expressed how potential donors perceive and determine the amount or quality of charitable donations. Donors often behave more selfishly when they can avoid learning how their decisions affect others or rely on the possibility that their decisions do not influence the outcome (Exley, 2016). Donors' achieve more selfish outcomes by delegating decisions to others or by avoiding



situations that involve giving decisions due to peer effects in charitable giving. American individuals and corporations contributed an estimated \$390.05 billion to U.S. charities in 2016, which is equivalent to 2.7 percent in current dollars of all contributions received in 2016 by charitable organizations (Giving USA, 2017).

From another perspective of donors' willingness to donate, Pöyry, Parvinen, and McFarland (2017) found that multiple interactions with donors generate leads. Pöyry et al. reassured donors of the benefits of donations used when donors are approached more than once regarding the same charitable intentions. Also, Wang, Zhu, and Handy (2016) determined that showing empathy plays a significant role in encouraging charitable donations and that nonprofit leaders can develop strategies for promoting empathy and prosociality.

Lee and Babiak (2017) discussed donor strategy through communication signals of societal values such as Corporate Social responsibility (CSR) and explained the use of in-kind gifts once they leave the donor's hands. Lee and Babiak explored how the outcomes and impacts associated with a donation program, including CSR, the ability to process product donations efficiently, and the extent of performance measurement, can increase willingness to donate to leaders of nonprofits organizations. The authors encouraged leaders of nonprofits to implement program activities that involve behavior, skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, condition, or other attributes that can impede or promote success in achieving the charitable organizational objectives because in-kind giving represents an increasingly attractive vehicle for corporate giving. The results showed that nonprofit leaders who implementing the strategies would be better able to

improve and meet an agency's or charitable organization's needs, through decreasing the cost of participating and enhancing communication and employee training thereby offering a larger window of opportunity to retrieve donations.

Luengo Kanacri et al. (2016) provided strategies to engage in prosocial behaviors, ranging from formal help through institutions to more informal or spontaneous help to others. The authors used the research to demonstrate how a context-specific dimension of empathy toward the poor and beliefs promoting donors' capacity to solve poverty situations and dependency on people's lack of competence thereby coping with vulnerable situations. Luengo Kanacri et al. (2016) further suggested that engaged donors increased giving behaviors which in turn favors donors' civic engagement and sustainability of NPOs.

Johnson, Peck, and Schweidel (2014) provided strategies to determine whether it is possible to predict consumer relationship perceptions and willingness to donate using purchase behavior data. Johnson, Peck, and Schweidel used the research methodology to determine customer relationship perceptions and willingness to give which was captured using consumer surveys and matched to the behavioral information in an organization's database. Johnson, Peck, and Schweidel provided useful and purposeful surveys to enable Senior leaders of NPOs to predict future behavior based on patterns of past conduct: segmentation into categories based on past conduct, prediction based on the frequency of purchase, and a customer relationship management model that predicts the likelihood of a future relationship with the consumer. Many senior leaders of NPOs used Johnson, Peck, and Schweidel's research in which customers included categories such as members,

subscribers, loyal purchasers, or donors based on a single behavior, at predicting consumer relationship perceptions. Nonprofit senior leaders must, therefore, examine the effectiveness of customer relationship management models of purchase behavior because doing so will help indirectly predict future donation behavior.

From a different perspective, donation intention determines the emotional attachment to the donor with dependence on social media (Wan, Lu, Wang, & Zhao, 2017). Social factors such as identification, interaction, and information value from donors and technical factors such as sociability and personalization of donors also influence donors (Wan et al., 2017). Similarly, Gilstrap and Minchow-Proffitt (2017) suggested that nonprofits must craft social media policies using ethical frameworks to guide online activity to assist communities in meeting the social needs of individuals and not allow social media content to influence donors.

Furthermore, Gleasure and Feller (2016) explored donation behavior in charitable crowdfunding based on the distinction between pure altruism and warm glow motivations. The authors' noted that donations to corporate organizations affect outcome-related factors, such as fundraising targets and the likelihood of meeting that goal, while contributions to individuals are more affected by interaction-related factors, such as the level of dialogue around a campaign. Senior leaders of nonprofits organizations need to understand that crowdfunding campaigns must run on dedicated charitable platforms by individual campaigners and should also consider warm glow donation behaviors for their potential donors as strategies to retain donors for their organizations.

**Intrinsic motivation to donate.** Gorczyca and Hartman (2017) indicated that

intrinsic motivation is moderately and positively related to attitudes toward helping others which tends to focus on the workplace and educational settings. Intrinsic motivation to donor retention and engagement through social media platforms and millennials enhance the constant connection to a charitable organization and its cause (Gorczyca & Hartman, 2017). Gorczyca and Hartman's study helps senior leaders of NPOs in identifying and uncovering the relationship between intrinsic motivation and prosocial attitudes among the millennial generation because what motivates millennials is useful for charitable organizations in targeting millennials as volunteers and donors. Nonprofit leaders must consider the type of messages to send to specific demographics that can positively donate towards a good cause (Gorczyca & Hartman, 2017). Gorczyca and Hartman (2017) further suggested that engaged donors increased understanding and the importance of taking a different tone when sending messages to attract a millennial male's participation than it would a woman's and to enhance knowledge of millennial behavior and attitudes.

Charitable giving is stronger when a participant is motivated to think about long-term goals since giving to a charity serves the long-term purpose of helping a charity campaign and the donor become a better person. Green, Lozano, and Simmons (2015) found that increasing the number of participants in a tournament influence prosocial behavior in subsequent interactions on charitable donations and investment made by donors out of their earnings. A collaborative approach by corporate leaders of nonprofits organizations can serve as an incentive structure to influences' donor behavior within an organization where leaders understand how donor behavior affects the long-term purpose

of the NPO (Green et al., 2015). The results of Green et al. study provide insight that nonprofit senior leaders can use to identify the effect of rank on charitable giving independent of earnings. The findings can also further help nonprofits in identifying how donors are more likely to donate to a charitable fund due to the satisfactory state.

**Fundraising activities.** Senior leaders of NPOs often lack information on business angel investment activity. Notwithstanding this fact, senior leaders of NPOs transformed the economic environment for small and medium-sized enterprises, during the 2008 financial crisis resulting in significant declines in the availability of bank lending and venture capital (Mason & Harrison, 2015). However, during the early stage of the financial crisis, business angel investment activity and individual angels provided the help for leaders of NPOs to continue to stay in business and be sustainable.

Business angels' (BAs) or donors' play a significant role in stimulating funding activities (Bilau, Mason, Botelho, & Sarkar, 2017). Bilau et al. (2017) examined the responsiveness of angels to initiatives such as funding activities by leaders of NPOs with the hardest hit by the financial crisis of 2008 and subsequent global recession and, found out that businesses had to take extreme economic and fiscal measures to reduce their budget deficits. The authors' examined the implementation of severe austerity measures in Portugal which experienced one of the deepest recessions in the European Union. Bilau et al. (2017) confirmed that business angels' and donors' intervention to support leaders of nonprofits could have a positive impact on community improvement and development. However, the different types of intervention have varied in take-up rates. Leaders of NPOs must encourage and entice business angels with a more significant

component in strategies to increase the level of funding activity for successful growth.

Milosevic (2018) examined the factors leading to low performance in funding activities such as venture capital (VC) markets. The author used human and social capital perspectives, to investigate the relationship between the professional experience and education of VC firm managers and identified; 1) the success of portfolio firms on the one hand, and 2) fundraising activity on the other. Milosevic (2018) focused on the benefits of the community and to the French VC market and found a positive relationship between task-specific human capital variables and the exit success of VC-backed firms. However, unlike research from the U.S. market, the author found out that the importance of higher social networks for raising more considerable funds in markets helps in developing secure networks thereby offering nonprofit leaders' inputs such as GuideStar.com to engage donors and supporters with fundraising activities to use as evidence in developing strategic funding activities to retain donors for their organizations.

**Nonprofit growth and sustainability.** To maximize stakeholder or donors' values over an uncertain time frame, nonprofit leaders ought to pay attention to donors' relationships. Thus, proper donor management has instrumental value for nonprofits in the sense that if nonprofits are prudent in the relationships with donors and the environment in which it operates, nonprofit senior leaders can achieve the ultimate decision of market success. Strategic stakeholder management according to Berman, Wicks, Kotha, and Jones (1999) helps senior leaders of nonprofits to view their stakeholders as part of an environment that should manage revenues, profits and

ultimately returns to shareholders, donors, and the community that the nonprofit operates.

To understand the nature of sustainability, Weiland, Bleicher, Polzin, Rauschmayer, and Rode (2017) compared three classical experiments in the natural and social sciences along three central dimensions: 1) aims related to knowledge production, 2) roles of experimenters and participants, and 3) unpredictability of outcomes. Weiland et al. (2017) found that two influential current theories about sustainability transformations provide analysis towards a need to better understand experiments that directly deal with the (multi-level) governance set-up to enable sustainability transformations for implementing effective management practices and organizational financial sustainability.

Alberti and Varon Garrido (2017) provided resources that help leaders of NPOs to develop successful business strategies and design related to innovative business models. Hertz (2015) noted some useful information for the benefit of dynamic senior leaders of NPOs in areas of innovative design, referring to the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (2019a). Also, Follman, Cseh, and Brudney (2016) offered detailed strategies of why and how NPOs can employ innovative strategies to substantially increase and motivate the number of staff leading volunteer programs. Dwyer and Azevedo (2016) and Kay, Polonsky, and Inglis (2017) found that because volunteers frequently fulfill multiple roles, leaders need to deliver volunteer-driven events by designing strategies to attract and manage volunteers' experiences to ensure growth and sustainability. To improve funding or prevent or reverse losses of funding to their organizations, nonprofit senior leaders need to develop and monitor a strategy that accounts for business growth and

change over time (Hardy, 2017).

Mayer, Wang, Egginton, and Flint (2014) suggested that more diversification reduces volatility at the expense of reduced expected revenue and that nonprofit leaders should not take this relationship lightly. Mayer et al. (2014) further found that other motives for nonprofit leaders to hold investments depend on the compositional change in the portfolio of donors because a more diversified portfolio achieved by replacing earned income with donations reduces both volatilities and expected revenue. Also, Shea and Wang (2016) postulated strategies to ensure that nonprofit leaders use to implement resource development and diversification.

Manso (2017) suggested that corporate leaders should create a culture that tolerates early failure and rewards long-term performance. Manso expressed that employees from the top down must receive incentives upon innovations because, in this era of fast-paced technological change, innovation is becoming a business imperative that leaders need to keep pace to prevent going out of business, hence ensuring sustainable growth. Similarly, Godart, Görg, and Hanley (2017) determined that organizations with trust-based working hours in the form of flexible working-time arrangements subsequently help employees develop the innovative and strategic performance of firms and the growing competition in the nonprofit sector.

Megheirkouni (2017) explored the competencies of leadership to understand the nature of leadership competencies in non-profit organizations which can be a potential guide to nonprofit leaders to focus on specific skills for general purposes. Also, to enhance the value creation process through the development of partnerships with



businesses, Lyakhov and Gliedt (2017) advocated that leaders need to create sustainability value by promoting environmental principles and influencing policymakers to support the pro-environmental legislation. Thus, the sources and types of value creation through collaborations with business leaders and the partnership processes with stakeholders can provide potential benefits to senior leaders of NPOs leading to different views of partnerships for sustainable value creation.

From a different perspective, Townsend, McDonald, and Cathcart (2017) examined how managing tensions such as discretion, leadership style, and distance about flexible work arrangements enhance not only financial vulnerability but also organizational stability. Moreover, Fajardo, Townsend, and Bolander (2018) examined whether and how a NPO's financial efficiency and its solicitation type-namely, whether it allows donors the ability to restrict contributions to their preferred choices-influence individual donations. Thus, when donors limit their contributions to the NPOs, it does not only influence individual donors but can also affect the size of nonprofit operating reserves, hence affecting growth and sustainability. Key themes identified in the research literature are explained in Section 3 under the Executive Summary of Key Themes.

### **Transition and Summary**

The existing body of literature on strategies for retaining donors for NPOs is varied. Researchers who explored nonprofit strategies for retaining donors offered organizational leaders limited evidence on the processes for retaining donors and strategies for organizing active fundraising. My analysis of the literature review findings revealed the need for senior leaders of NPOs to identify and implement strategies for

retaining and increasing donors. Also, my analysis of professional and academic literature review included articles related to the topic of strategies for retaining donors as drivers of nonprofit donor retention, including explanations of theories and current media collective ideals that current and future nonprofit leaders may use to develop, enhance, and implement strategies for retaining donors.

In Section 2, I included the purpose of the study topic, a comprehensive depiction of the research methodology and design, population and sampling, data collection instruments, and techniques used in the research study. Also, this section includes a discussion of data collection and organization techniques, data analysis techniques, reliability, and validity. Three leaders of a NPO in the Northeastern United States participated in a semistructured telephone interview to explore strategies that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations. I continued to interview each participant until I achieved data saturation and analyzed organizational documents using methodological triangulation. Finally, I included measures to protect the study participants as human subjects and identified data storage requirements as per Walden University standards.

In Section 3, I included a comprehensive account of the research conducted for the DBA Consulting Capstone. I used the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (2019) and its Criteria for Performance Excellence as a tool to conduct in-depth research for and about my client organization. The overarching goal of this study was to assist my client leaders to improve key work processes, address strategic challenges, and increase overall performance towards retaining donors. The research reported in Section 3

included an integrated, systems-based approach that explored the following seven key management and leadership areas: leadership; strategy; customers; measurement, analysis, and knowledge management; workforce; operations; and results.

## Section 2: The Project

Section 2 includes the study purpose; the role of the researcher; an overview of the study participants, research method and design, population and sampling, and data collection; a discussion of research ethics; and information on reliability and validity. The participants were three leaders of an NPO in the Northeast United States. I used semistructured telephone interviews as the primary data collection technique along with a review of company documents, which included financial reports, donation policies, and procedures participants used to retain donors for their organizations. The focus of this qualitative multiple case study was on exploring the strategies that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations. The findings might provide valuable guidance for nonprofit leaders on strategic interventions they can use to build a stable foundation for their organizations that supports future growth.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations. The target population consisted of the chair of the BOD and two leaders of an NPO based in the Northeast United States who have implemented strategies to retain donors for their organizations. The contribution of this study to positive social change may include providing nonprofit leaders with strategic interventions they can use to contribute to the survival and longevity of their organizations. By implementing these interventions, leaders may be able to build a stable foundation for their organizations that supports future growth and fosters new job creation that leads to prosperity in local communities.

### **Role of the Researcher**

Qualitative researchers serve and act as data collection instruments (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Saunders et al., 2015; Yin, 2018). I served as the primary instrument for data collection in this single case study. Management researchers achieve appropriate strategies and outcomes through case study researcher (Miela, Cubala, Mazurkiewicz, & Jakuszkowiak-Wojten, 2018; Ota et al., 2016). O'Connor and Evans (2019) posited that researchers set the tone for the study process through communication strategies such as positivity, openness, and assurances while building positive social relationship maintenance. My connection with the topic of nonprofit leaders' strategies for retaining donors originated from my desire for NPOs to increase overall performance towards retaining donors to support innovation, execution of strategies, and community advancement. Throughout the entirety of this study, I strove to keep an open mind, with a willingness to remove my personal views on the subject and to gain an understanding of the gathered material to avoid any bias. I did not have any previous interaction or association with, or knowledge of, the client organization before this study.

Each participant in the study signed a consent form and voluntarily participated in the study. According to the *Belmont Report*, researchers must follow three basic principles: respect, beneficence, and justice (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016). Westfall et al. (2016) noted that protecting the rights and welfare of human subjects is the primary function of the IRB. I treated each participant ethically according to the terms of the DBA Research Agreement. The IRB is responsible for ensuring that all Walden University research complies with the University's ethical

standards as well as U.S. federal regulations (Walden University, 2017a). Before collecting data for analysis of this study, as part of the DBA Consulting program, I obtained IRB preapproval for the proposed interview questions and interaction with the client organization (approval no. 05-23-17-0662665).

I recognized the existence of potential bias based on my personal experience and worldview. Thus, to mitigate bias and avoid viewing data through a personal lens or perspective, I used member checking as discussed by Bacon, Eppelheimer, Kasamatsu, Lam, and Nottingham (2017) as well as Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, and Walter (2016). Member checking increases the quality of data analyzed by the researcher, and it improves the validity of the study results (Willis, Sullivan-Bolyai, Knafl, & Cohen, 2016). The member checking process involved participants reviewing their responses to the semistructured interviews I conducted with them.

Conducting semistructured interviews allows researchers to collect in-depth and vital information from participants (Saunders et al., 2015; Vranješ, Jovičić, & Drinić, 2016). Vranješ et al. (2016) argued that semistructured interviews are the most common type of interviews used in qualitative research because of the flexibility and open nature of the questions the researchers ask. Face-to-face interviews induce more small talk, nonverbal communication, and provides more expression of the participants' humanity (Bowden & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015). To complete the interviews, I used an interview protocol (see Appendices A and B) to collect data, confirm data saturation, mitigate bias, and ensure that I asked all participants the same questions. Finally, I aligned the semistructured interview questions with the 2019–2020 Baldrige Excellence Framework

and my central research question.

### **Participants**

Dahlia, Togar, and Priyantono (2018) and Yin (2018) noted several steps in a successful qualitative study, which include obtaining adequate knowledge of the research topic, recruiting participants, choosing an appropriate data collection, building and gaining rapport with the patients, and choosing the structure of interviews, as well as putting the questions in order and revising the questions. Junsong, Lei, Qikun, and Yong (2016) noted that, to ensure the privacy of participants, it is crucial that researchers recruit the appropriate participants because doing so ensures alignment with the research question. Walden University staff and faculty approved the client organization to be part of the Doctor of Business Administration Consulting Capstone program. The organization underwent an approval process that included being vetted against the specific Walden University criteria for community research partners, as well as meeting specific IRB requirements. I identified three senior leaders of the assigned NPO who have demonstrated the ability to retain donors. I assigned the pseudonym BCD to protect the identity of my client organization and its leaders. Eligibility for this study requires participants at a NPO located in the Northeastern United States to be actively engaged with different donors. Researchers often select participants who are actively engaged with different donors and who have sufficient knowledge or awareness of donors' behavior (Alchieri, Bessani, Greve, & da Silva Fraga, 2018; Alhaji, Haruna, Muhammad, Lawan, & Isola, 2018). Researchers further assert that participant observation and flexibility regarding how participants can take part in qualitative research might improve participant

access to research, recruitment, and the response rate (Hayre, Blackman, Carlton, & Eyden, 2018; Heath, Williamson, Williams, & Harcourt, 2018).

To enhance the understanding of the phenomenon, the eligible participants identified successful strategies for retaining donors. I built a relationship with my client organization leadership team, throughout many weeks of interaction, following the DBA Consulting Capstone program requirements. All three study participants (a) were over the age of 18, (b) had served in a leadership position, (c) were closely involved in the successful donor retention, and (d) occupied positions that supported answering the doctoral study interview questions. All of the senior leaders signed the Walden Senior Leaders' Consent Form before proceeding with any of the interviews.

## **Research Method and Design**

### **Research Method**

I used the qualitative research method for this study. Qualitative researchers seek to find out *what* and *why* through interrogative strategies and to achieve a deep understanding of the phenomena under study (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Yin, 2018). A qualitative method was suitable for this study because I explored the phenomenon of strategies that nonprofit executives use to retain donors to gain a deeper understanding of donor retention in the nonprofit sector. Researchers use the quantitative method to test hypotheses through the statistical measurement of the relationships or differences among variables (Saunders et al., 2015). The quantitative methodology is not appropriate for this study because I seek to explore the phenomena through participants' experiences of a phenomenon, rather than testing hypotheses on variables' relationships or differences.



According to Yin (2018), researchers used the mixed method to combine quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques and analytical processes in addressing research questions. For this study, I did not use the mixed method to address the research questions because there is no quantitative component necessary for addressing this study's purpose.

### **Research Design**

I used a single-case study design for this study. In qualitative research studies, researchers use phenomenology, ethnography, or case study design to conduct in-depth experiences, methods, and procedures (Yin, 2018). Thus, using a case study design and conducting an in-depth exploration of nonprofit leaders' strategies for retaining donors is appropriate for this study. Additionally, Ridder (2017) noted that researchers use a case study design to explore a phenomenon and to highlight similarities and differences across various case study designs and to analyze their respective contributions to theory. Furthermore, Enwereuzor (2017) asserted that scholars use phenomenological designs to describe a phenomenon to explore research participants' experiences through identifying and understanding participants' perceptions, interests, and preferences from experiencing phenomena. A phenomenological design is not suitable for this study because I seek to explore a phenomenon and not to describe the meanings of individuals' perceptions, interests, and preferences from experiencing phenomena.

Researchers use the case study design to gather participant information with rational inquiry seeking common themes (Yin, 2018). Additionally, the researcher conducts semistructured interviews in qualitative research and provides the participant

with understanding and inputs (Kopp, Crump, & Weis, 2017; Pucher, Aggarwal, Singh, Tahir, & Darzi, 2015). Using the Baldrige 2019-2020 Excellence Framework as my tool to help ensure a holistic, systems-based assessment, I conducted semistructured interviews to collect study data. To achieve data saturation and ensure the content validity of the qualitative study, the interview process of three leaders and data collection continued until no new data existed relating to the research question. Anderson (2017), as well as Fusch and Ness (2015), posited data saturation is achieved when the researcher does not identify new themes through data analysis and that the data collected is trustworthy, credible, and dependable.

Researchers use the qualitative case study to explore a phenomenon through participants' experiences (Yin, 2018). Thus, using a case study design to conduct an in-depth exploration of nonprofit leaders' strategies for retaining donors is appropriate for this study. Additionally, Ridder (2017) noted that researchers use a case study design to explore a phenomenon and to highlight similarities and differences across various case study designs and to analyze their respective contributions to theory. Furthermore, Enwereuzor (2017) asserted that scholars use phenomenological designs to describe a phenomenon to explore research participants' experiences through identifying and understanding participants' perceptions, interests, and preferences from experiencing phenomena. A phenomenological design is not suitable for this study because I seek to explore a phenomenon and not to describe the meanings of individuals' perceptions, interests, and preferences from experiencing phenomena. Qualitative researchers used ethnographic designs to explore complex cultural phenomena, management change and

other transformations (Burgstaller et al., 2018; Narain, 2017). Using qualitative research, I engaged with my client organizational senior leaders to explore strategies for retaining donors and long-term sustainability. Therefore, a study based on ethnographic methodology will not be suitable because it will take longer to generate and analyze data to explore and answer the research question in this doctoral study.

### **Population and Sampling**

The population for this qualitative single case study was three nonprofit senior leaders who have demonstrated the abilities and strategies for retaining donors for long-term sustainability. I incorporated a purposeful sample of three participants who are leaders in a NPO in the Northeastern United States that can provide data on strategies for retaining donors and for long-term sustainability. The rationale for employing a purposeful sample of three participants according to Yin (2018), is that qualitative researchers use purposeful sampling to obtain reliable data as it related to the research study. Fouché and le Roux (2018) and Tengpongsthorn (2017) posited that purposive sampling in a qualitative research study helps in evaluating assumptions and dealing with a sample of three participants.

Christine, Zubin, and Claudia (2016) noted that the sample size for a qualitative study was how many participants researchers could identify as appropriate. However, because participants' experiences differ, sampling must be ongoing until data saturation is complete (Rus, Yasin, Yunus, Rahim, & Ismail, 2015; Tagharrobi, Mohammadkhan Kermanshahi, & Mohammadi, 2016; Turner-Bowker et al., 2018). Researchers describe saturation as the point at which no new data is emerging from semistructured interviews,

and extra collection of information fails to provide new data, themes, insights, or perspectives for further synthesis for new coding (Rus et al., 2015; Tagharrobi et al., 2016; Turner-Bowker et al., 2018). I conducted semistructured interviews with the participants to gather study data. I conducted semistructured in-depth interviews via telephone conference call. Conducting phone interviews encourages participants to speak freely (Saunders et al., 2015). The prospective participant's geographical location created a challenge to conduct face-to-face interviews; henceforth, I interviewed the participants from a private home office to safeguard their privacy.

The criteria used to select participants for this study included leaders of the NPO in the Northeastern United States who possessed knowledge in successful nonprofit donor retention. Walden University administrators created the DBA consultant capstone with specific requirements and protocols for the professional doctorate program. The client leader signed the DBA research agreement (see Appendix C [redacted]), which served as the master agreement between Walden University and BCD for the consulting relationship. The selected leaders responded to semistructured interview questions and company documents helped as a form of secondary data.

Fusch and Ness (2015), as well as Rus et al. (2015), noted that failure to reach data saturation has an impact on the quality of the research conducted and hampers content validity. To ensure data saturation, I asked the participants to explain any responses not entirely expressed to help answer further descriptive questions. I also asked additional clarification until the participants provided no more new information, thus indicating data saturation-

Qualitative researchers use methodological triangulation to develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon based on the use of multiple data sources (Drouin, Stewart, & Van Gorder, 2015; Joslin & Müller, 2016). Thus, to improve credibility, reliability, transferability, and confirmability in qualitative studies, researchers must have a strong demand for validation and accreditation of studies (Abdalla, Oliveira, Azevedo, & Gonzalez, 2018). I incorporated the sample size of three leaders who are connected to successfully retaining donors. I conducted member checking to reach data saturation and confirm what they said and meant. I kept proper records at each stage of data collection and used notes-taking which provided an accurate description of the setting as recommended and practiced by Fusch and Ness (2015) and Yin (2018).

### **Ethical Research**

I received IRB approval from Walden University before conducting this study. My Walden University IRB number for this study is 05-23-17-0662665. To ensure ethical research, it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure the participants understand their rights, responsibilities, and risks associated with participation and also avoid exploitation (Lamkin & Elliott, 2018; Spike, 2017). Obtaining informed consent from the participants before conducting the study is one method to ensure understanding of these key elements (Burke, Beskow, Trinidad, Fullerton, & Brelsford, 2018). I presented an informed consent form to the senior leaders before the interview process. Signed consent is required before conducting any interviews.

Participation in this study was voluntary. As such, participants could request a withdrawal from the study at any time for any reason by informing either myself or Walden University. If a participant decided to withdrawal from the study, I destroyed all content collected from that participant up until that point in time. I documented the withdrawal process and notified Walden University faculty, the client organization, and the participant confirmation of the withdrawal and interaction with that individual will immediately cease after that.

There were no incentives, monetary or otherwise, offered for participation in this study, nor accepting any incentives, monetary or otherwise, for conducting this study. To ensure ethical protection and confidentiality, I assigned pseudonyms to the participants, Participant 1, Participant 2, and Participant 3, as well as assign a pseudonym to the client organization, BCD. I redacted all identification from the collected information to maintain the confidentiality of the client organization and participants. To further ensure the availability of the protected data I securely stored all collected study documentation, transcripts, audio recordings, and interview forms, which is limited to my access and use only. I will retain the data for 5 years after study completion to protect the rights of participants.

Consent can be a barrier to research (Walden University, 2017b). Thus, to adequately safeguard and encourage research involving informed consent, waivers may be necessary especially with IRB in which excluding sexual minority youth (SMY) from the research can violate ethical research principles, because the research may not recognize their autonomy (Flores, McKinney, Arscott, & Barroso, 2018). To this end, to

prevent bias, researchers must develop strategies for waiving parental consent and strategies to secure waivers from review boards, and present participants' feedback on research without violating legal, ethical, and regulatory requirements.

Kyriakopoulos, Tzouramanis, and Manolopoulos (2017) suggested that research on copyright protection must counterbalance the failures of legal measures against digital piracy. The authors expressed that recent research has focused on proposing watermarking methods for relational data as well as on the types of attacks that aim at removing or destroying the watermark, and thus making digital watermark becoming the top strategy of the list of technical countermeasures. Similarly, Monteleone (2015) noted that the use of data subjects and informed consent are the current primary legal safeguards of data protection and privacy rights because these reflect individuals' self-determination and control over one's private sphere and many jurisdictions acknowledge this fact. Both Kyriakopoulos et al. (2017) and Monteleone (2015) demonstrated that the use of innovative information notices, like salient alerts and nudges, are promising means of behavioral change and serves as alternative or complement to current legal measures for data protection. Hence, improved and well designed, transparency and decision-making by researchers will lead to improved individual privacy, validity, and confidence in the study (Kyriakopoulos et al., 2017).

Moreover, to ensure the ethical protection of participants and ensure a full understanding of the interview process, the interview protocol (see Appendix A) included an introduction script that reminded the participants of their rights to withdraw from this study at any time. To ensure privacy, I redacted the names of all participants interviewed,

the name of the nonprofit client organization, all documents, the DBA Research agreement (see Appendix C) as well as the scholar-consultant Service Orders. The leaders of the NPO received no compensation for participating in the study. Gelinas et al. (2018) and Largent et al. (2018) suggested that IRBs do not support payments to participants that may increase coercion or undue influence. Secured flash drive, files, and data will be maintained for 5 years to protect the rights of participants. At the end of the 5-year term, I will destroy the data. Also, I will ensure that all electronic data and communications with my client organizations are encrypted for 5 years to protect the rights of participants and the client. Finally, all study and research documents, transcripts and interview forms are under lock and key, and all electronic documents will be under a password-protected flash drive in my home vault for no less than 5 years.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

Researchers must carefully consider which data collection approach will provide the best information to answer the research question under investigation (Rosenthal, 2016). According to Fusch and Ness (2015), Saunders et al. (2015), and Yin (2018), in qualitative research studies, the researcher serves as the primary data collection instrument. For this qualitative single case study, I served as the primary data collection instrument.

Researchers need to identify the data collection process by conducting an open-ended semistructured interview. Tunnecliff et al. (2015) and Tuttas (2015) described that real-time audiovisual Web conference technology offers qualitative researchers a promising alternative means to carry out data collection methods supported by Internet



technology in the form of random semistructured telephone interviews, email correspondence, discussion boards, and chat rooms to explore themes and gather data. Vogl, Zartler, Schmidt, and Rieder (2018) suggested strategies that can increase both traceability and credibility of data analysis from interviews. Applications and implications of data can be beneficial and provide an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and perceptions (Rosenthal, 2016).

I used the 2019-2020 Baldrige Performance Excellence Program and criteria to collect the data from the three leaders of the NPO. The semistructured interviews provided insight into the strategies nonprofit leaders use to retain donors for their organization. Researchers use open-ended questions to conduct semistructured interviews (Horzum & Ertekin, 2018; Yazlik & Erdogan, 2015). I conducted semistructured interviews to collect data from three leaders in the client organization using open-ended questions (see Appendix A) together with an interview protocol (see Appendix B). I conducted all three interviews, with open-ended questions and allocated 60 minutes to gather perceptions or experiences. I used audio-recording and transcribed the interviews, followed by member checking to verify the validity and accuracy of the representations.

Furthermore, after transcribing the interview data, I used member checking by providing each interviewee with a preliminary analysis of the transcripts for confirmation of analysis and understanding to verify and validate data correctness. To clarify statements and be more collaborative and confirm the accuracy of semistructured interview transcriptions, clarify public documents, and data supplied by the research participants, I used member checking (Bacon et al., 2017; Birt et al., 2016). Data

triangulation occurs through an evaluative and innovative in-depth member checking to ensure accuracy during data analysis (Bacon et al., 2017; Birt et al., 2016). Finally, I provided the client leader with a copy of this doctoral study to review and approve before publication.

### **Data Collection Technique**

In qualitative research, the researcher is often the primary instrument for data collection (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I began the data collection process upon receiving IRB approval to explore strategies that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations. The semistructured interviews included three senior leaders, reviewing internal and external public documents such as organizational website, online or paper surveys, interviews, observations, site visits, video recordings, performance outcomes data from the nonprofit database GuideStar, and analyzing known competitors are the data collection techniques for this study.

Qualitative researchers use purposeful sampling to identify participants, to identify the necessary competencies with the use of communication skills and that using purposeful sampling provides a pragmatic solution or a shortcut for researchers, compared with exhaustive sampling (Benoot, Hannes, & Bilsen, 2016). Also, purposeful sampling makes the results more conceptually aligned with the purpose of the research study, more systematic, transparent, and helps in generating rigorous, verifiable analytic interpretations (Benoot et al., 2016; Gentles, Charles, Nicholas, Ploeg, & McKibbin, 2016). The participants responded to six open-ended semistructured interview questions.

The interview questions included the overarching question from recent literature

and the research question focused on strategies nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations from the interview protocol (see Appendix A). For data collection purposes, researchers use semistructured interviews with open-ended questions to obtain information regarding timeliness, completeness, clarity, and usability from participants (Asante & Lentoer, 2017; Horzum & Ertekin, 2018; Leslie, Abu-Rahma, & Jaleel, 2018; Yazlik & Erdogan, 2015). The semistructured interviews of this qualitative study provided an in-depth analysis of how member checking of the data interpretation or transcript review can enhance overall data.

### **Data Organization**

I created a file naming system to enable me to stay organized and to keep track of all electronic data as well as maintained a journal of conversations and thoughts and stored all hard copies in a locked file in my home office. Researchers develop and tests the validity and analyze the data collection process while maintaining the quality of data (Shatu & Yigitcanlar, 2018). Leinonen, Miettinen, Heikkinen, Pitkäniemi, and Malila (2017) suggested that researchers should maintain and provide additional data to analyze throughout the qualitative analysis process to address the four main dimensions of data quality: completeness, comparability, validity, and timeliness. The methodological implication of the data collection strategy is that researchers can use the tools above to collect data efficiently and effectively. To further ensure confidentiality and privacy for this study, I used pseudonyms for the participants and a fictional name for the client organization.

Following Walden University IRB requirements, I stored all saved, written correspondence in my home safe for 5 years. Furthermore, all digital communication and documentation will be on an encrypted thumb drive. All the data from this study will also be in a locked safe and stored for 5 years. After 5 years all paper documentation will be shredded, and all electronic digital data will be wiped from the thumb-drive to ensure full compliance with Walden University IRB requirements and privacy issues.

### **Data Analysis**

For this qualitative single case study, I used methodological triangulation to gain an understanding of a phenomenon to analyze primary data. Researchers use methodological triangulation to identify exciting new and complex phenomena, provide alternative perspectives to complex problems, and gain a more productive and more holistic understanding and using methodological triangulation also emphasizes the importance to integrate participant feedback (Drouin et al., 2015; Joslin & Müller, 2016). Thus, to improve credibility, reliability, transferability, and confirmability in qualitative studies, researchers must have a strong demand for validation and accreditation of studies (Abdalla et al., 2018). I used client organization data together with semistructured interview material, written and verbal information collected throughout this study, financial statements, demographic documents, BCD website, promotional material, and public competitor data while utilizing methodological triangulation.

In this qualitative case study, I used NVivo 11 software to analyze the data above. I identified themes and grouped them into specific research categories. The collection and analysis were through manual processes, and validation of interview data occurred via

member checking procedures. The significance of the data for this qualitative single case study aligns with the 2019-2020 Baldrige Excellence Framework that Walden scholar consultants used to evaluate their client organizations. Finally, after identifying the theory and themes, I related these to current literature using the conceptual framework lenses for this study through the transformational leadership theory as demonstrated by Burns (1978), leadership behavior and the client organization. Also, to further explore strategies that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations, Zapata Cantu and Mondragon's (2016) asserted that the sustainability of NPOs must encompass the concept to maintain donors and formulate management processes of funding. I expect to uncover and explore strategies for sustainability that nonprofit senior leaders can use to retain donors for their organizations.

### **Reliability and Validity**

Quality research is a process involving the researcher paying attention to appropriate and recommended standards regularly. It requires a checklist, just as the one provided by the DBA doctoral study process and document (Walden University, 2017) and the Research Ethics & compliance (Walden University, 2017b). These resources and explanations from Saunders et al. (2015) provided information on the quality of the research design. Also, Heale and Twycross (2015) explained the credibility, applicability, consistency, and neutrality of the results from the data sampling. The checklist serves as and defines the standard that experts of the Walden DBA community have laid out. The research may vary depending on whether one is using a quantitative, qualitative or mixed approach. The significant difference between qualitative and quantitative approaches lies

in the purpose of the methodology and results expected by the researcher (Saunders et al., 2015). In qualitative research, the research question needs exploration, description, or understanding.

### **Reliability**

Reliability addresses the dependability of the study to ensure consistency of the data is achieved by providing transparency such as ensuring member checking of data interpretation, transcript review, and pilot test of the research study. If a research instrument, for example, a survey or questionnaire, produces similar results under consistently applied conditions, it lessens the chance that the obtained scores are due to randomly occurring factors, like seasonality or current events, and measurement error (Yin, 2018). The goal of reliability according to Yin (2018) is to minimize the errors and biases in a research study. Triangulation can help with bias and measurement errors, as it relates to document data quality and thereby maximize confidence in the findings of a qualitative study. By so doing, the researcher will be confident that the participants understand the purpose of the survey and the instructions. Again, Yin (2018) suggested that the researcher trains data collectors in the measurement strategy as well as persons to collaborate on the surveys, experiments, histories, and archival analysis.

### **Validity**

The significance of validity within this study provides an accurate representation of the phenomena to include the precise and objective collection of data. According to Saunders et al. (2015), the validity in qualitative research refers to the integrity and method of findings that potentially offers a rich source of data for researchers to use in

analyzing data. It is also important not to view validity and reliability as independent qualities. Measurement cannot be valid unless it is reliable (Yin, 2018). It must be both credible and dependable as an accurate representation of a concept or attribute.

Eventually, a doctoral research study design that meets standards for validity and reliability produces results that are both accurate (validity) and consistent (reliability) (Abdalla et al., 2018).

### **Credibility**

In contrast, Wright (2017) alluded to the fact that reliability in qualitative research, serves as an obstacle and therefore the reason for qualitative researchers to promote more quantification of qualitative research. Triangulation is a strategy that researchers can use in qualitative research to check and establish validity in research studies by analyzing a research question from multiple perspectives to ensure consistency and credibility. It is important to note that a rigorous and systematic analysis of qualitative data is an essential part of conducting a doctoral research study. Furthermore, Kozica, Teede, Harrison, Klein, and Lombard (2016) suggested that although data analysis comprises an ongoing process of 'testing the fit' between the data collection and analysis, data analysis must occur concurrently with data collection. However, just like Kozica et al. (2016), Azzam and Harman (2016) also alluded to the fact that transcript coding demonstrates the possible technique for quantifying transcribed interviews. The findings showed methods that the managers use to succeed in retaining donors for the organization. Janssen, Makareinis, and Solver (2014) noted that the failure rate of reliability assessments is often an essential element in assessing operational suitability

and sustainability. Likewise, Abdalla et al. (2018) suggested that researchers increase dependability, reliability, credibility, and transferability in their study through transparency, openness, clarity, peer review, and reproducing results of other studies. Hence, credibility and how researchers can improve the quality of their research and not quality itself makes the research studies original (Abdalla et al., 2018; Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016). There is a considerable amount of research in this area of study, and as I stand on the shoulders of other scholars, I enhanced credibility by integrating member checking, using methodological triangulation, and using an interview protocol. Boaz, Hanney, Borst, O'Shea, and Kok (2018) expressed that researchers that fail to engage stakeholders and to recognize that identification and involvement of stakeholders is an iterative and ongoing process, reduced the dependability and credibility of the study findings. Throughout the research process, I engaged feedback and clarification from the leaders of BCD to enhance credibility and reliability.

### **Confirmability**

To ensure this study is conducted rigorously another criterion to consider is confirmability to establish if the results of a study are unbiased and provide guidance to other researchers. Abdalla et al. (2018) posited that quality dimensions in research: reliability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability ensure validation and accreditation of studies. In this study, the strategies used to ensure confirmability include triangulation, member checking, and maintaining an audit trail. To eliminate potential bias, I collected data from multiple sources, used an interview protocol, transcribed notes



from the interviews, and allowed leaders of BCD to validate my findings (Hicks, Fairhurst, & Torgerson, 2018; Mathieu, Herbert, McGeechan, Herbert, & Barratt, 2015).

### **Transferability**

Adams, Chamberlain, and Giles (2019) proposed that researchers achieve the trustworthiness of a qualitative study when others can transfer the findings to other contexts or settings. In the same vein, Mullet (2018) concluded researchers use different approaches for a qualitative study to achieve rigor and trustworthiness to facilitate transferability through analytical approaches for critically describing, interpreting, and explaining the ways. For example, in this research study using purposeful sampling of the targeted population, and collection of in-depth data enhanced trustworthiness and transferability. Purposeful sampling identifies common patterns and enables researchers to make decisions more systematically and transparently to formulate and evaluate assumptions (Benoot et al., 2016). To achieve goals of transparency in a qualitative study, accountability and the use of detailed descriptions of study participants, framework, and location to enhance transferability, the study should move beyond compliance and requirements-driven approach to consider trust and relevance (Evans, Franks, & Chen, 2018). Thus, readers and future researchers can determine the transferability of my findings with the above provision of detailed information about the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, ethical practices, data collection instruments and techniques, data organization, and data analysis. Therefore, to ensure credibility and applicability in this study, I minimized bias and collected information until reaching data saturation.

### **Transition and Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations. In Section 2, I outlined the overall proposal for my doctoral study, and restated the study purpose, described the role of the researcher, and identified the participant pool. I also covered the research method, design, population, sampling, ethical research, study reliability, and validity. Furthermore, I provided information on data collection instruments and techniques; data organization; and, data analysis. In Section 3, I used the Baldrige framework as a tool to complete a holistic, systems-based assessment of my client organization. These details started with the BCD organizational profile. I concluded Section 3 with overall findings, my executive summary, overall project summary, and recommendations for future research.

### Section 3: Organizational Profile

BCD, a pseudonym, is an NPO formed in the Northeastern United States dedicated to helping children who have developmental differences such as autism, or who face challenges such as the loss of a parent, by using a specially bred and trained assistance or therapy dog. The specific mission description is to help children reach their social, emotional, and educational goals using animal-assisted therapy. Founded by a small group of visionary donors in 1999, BCD is part of a community foundation that consists of organizations and donors who want to directly support children who have developmental differences.

Additionally, BCD is a Silver-Level GuideStar participant, which demonstrates that senior leaders of BCD have a commitment to transparency of the organization's services with all stakeholders (Morse, Roberts, MacIntosh, & Bordone, 2018). BCD provides individually trained service dogs to those in need. BCD leaders rely solely on charitable donations to achieve this goal. BCD leaders travel to schools to present programs designed to educate and enhance the emotional well-being of future patients, their peers, school personnel, and families regarding emotional support and therapy animal services. Together, the BCD leaders and board members provide services based on BCDs' mission, vision, and values (MVV) to individuals diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders, characterized as emotional disabilities that often result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life (Figure 1).

## Key Factors Worksheet

### Organizational Description

BCD is an NPO and a resource for individuals who need the support of an animal to cope with emotional and psychological trauma. The specific mission of BCD is to provide programs to help children reach their social, emotional, and educational goals using an animal-assisted therapy dog. This includes, but is not limited to, educating the community about BCD's services such as training, adoption, and the opportunity to become a sponsor. Currently, BCD operates as one of the 236 nonprofit animal therapy clinics in the Northeastern region of the United States (Morse et al., 2018). Guide Star, as illustrated by Morse et al. (2018), noted the BCD organization as a "Silver-Level Participant" because the leaders of BCD demonstrated a commitment to transparency with all stakeholders. BCD organization was founded to serve children whose challenges range from autism to serious medical conditions and grief over the loss of a parent.

**Organizational environment.** The BCD organizational environment is a composite of the organization's mission, vision, and values (MVV) and is a critical and essential element in the framework of BCD's existence. Thus, in fulfilling the MVV, senior leaders of BCD consider themselves as strong advocates for the physical and mental benefits of emotional support animal ownership; they constantly work to ensure that children with a need keep their support animal with them throughout the animals' life span. Hundreds of BCD therapy pets and their owners are bonded safely in trust and progressive therapy. A review of BCD's organizational environment including product offerings, mission, vision, values, workforce segments, assets, and regulatory

requirements are provided in the following sections.

***Product offerings.*** BCD provides product offerings consisting of training and educational programs including vet care, dog food nutrition, socialization, and dog handling training; in-person and telephone therapy sessions; and therapy dog placements with children and families. Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Perkinson, Bostic, and Zimmerman (2015) noted that the success of training programs depends on the knowledge, skills, and self-assurance of their leadership and members. BCD leaders seek donations or sponsorships to support the services the workforce provides; these product offerings also include dog handling training. BCD leaders also require funding for educational program presentations designed to promote emotional and behavioral disorders education awareness and specific challenges autistic children face within their schools and communities. BCD senior leaders share information about community resources with individuals and families in need of animal-assisted therapy for children. In the same way, through private sessions or in small groups, consumers can gain access to a blend of mind and body approaches, with more than one therapy considered. BCD leaders also provide a variety of other training programs with specialized topics relevant to the needs and individual professional improvement plans of their clients. All the training programs offered are part of BCD leaders' ongoing activities to fulfill the purpose of BCD, and the senior leaders focus each training on providing youth-serving organizations with children in need of a therapy dog.

***Socialization program.*** BCD leaders provide to individuals and families with socialization events to assist them in receiving their dogs early and start the training

program in the early weeks of the service animals' life. The socialization program also provides services focused on specific goals for each client. The goals include communication skills, eye contact, body, and space to meet individual needs.

*Breeding program.* The success of BCD programs depends on the knowledge of leaders, training skills, and dogs. To become effective in working with children who face social, emotional or educational challenges, the dogs are specifically bred and trained by positive techniques and local trainers. Trainers use both natural and artificial breeding methods.

*Puppy raising program.* The puppy raising program is envisioned to pair a child and family in an opportunity to get to know his or her pup in a slow transition. The puppies are trained purposefully to serve and better meet the specific need of clients. Puppies are provided and raised in a safe environment.

*Awareness presentation.* The awareness program assists children and families with their underlying understanding of animal-assisted therapy needs while training participants on integration into their daily lifestyles. Presentations focused on the needs of the clients. Consumers can gain dog training and skills necessary to prepare them for the presence of and interaction with therapy animals.

BCD senior leaders and staff seek to accomplish outcomes such as personal empowerment for children, families, and communities in the long run because of organizational efforts that provide the presence of a therapy dog, which helps individuals with physical or emotional pains and anxieties. Stakeholders of BCD provide programs primarily focused on children whose challenges range from autism to severe medical

conditions to grief over the loss of a parent. The delivery mechanism for BCD leaders includes a hands-on approach to a positive experience to bring the value of therapy dogs. BCD products and services are delivered directly to a broad spectrum of individuals.

*Mission, vision, and values.* BCD's senior leaders have developed strong, consistent communication about their MVV and the goals in their strategic plan that underlie the work of the NPO, and they regularly seek feedback on the MVV and goals. Effective leadership practices to achieve the mission and vision statements are about leaders guiding stakeholders' decisions and behaviors, as well as providing motivation to connect the vision and mission of their organizations (Kopaneva & Sias, 2015; Rao, 2017). BCD organization has been proactively evolving and changing over the past 18 years in the way in which it offers animal-assisted interventions, and it guides employees in the therapy animal program to interact with a wide variety of clients. Leaders at BCD encouraged employees by providing an open communication environment that adhered to the core competency, mission, vision, and core values.

*Core competency.* BCD senior leaders promote the core competency, which directly correlates and supports the MVV of senior leaders (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2019). Leaders of BCD should focus on sustainability as a core competency to facilitate ongoing success. BCD leaders can leverage the mission-driven workforce, a core competency, to enable mission realization (Hsu & Tsaih, 2016).

*Mission.* Kopaneva and Sias (2015) stated in the organization's mission statement that the leader outlines the purpose that the organization seeks to accomplish, why it exists, and the expected ultimate result. BCD's mission is to help children who face

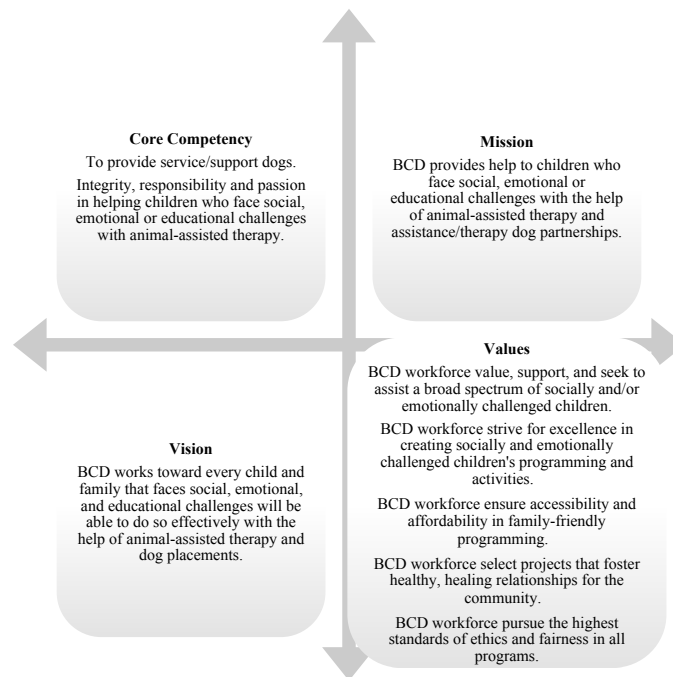
social, emotional, or educational challenges choose a service animal dog that will assist with their disability. BCD leaders dedicate limited staff resources toward supporting teams as they concentrate on the specific mission of BCD, which is to provide programs to help children reach their social, emotional, and educational goals using an animal-assisted therapy dog thereby, improving human health and well-being through the human-animal bond. The MVV reinforces the core competency by following organizational values that steer the decisions and reasons that the founder of BCD initially established.

*Vision.* The vision of the BCD NPO is to provide animal-assistance therapy and connect with others on an emotional level. BCD leaders have a shared vision and creative exchange of ideas. The vision of BCD Executive Director (ED) was developed in 1999 and remains relevant today with clear and effective communication, as noted in Table 1. Leaders that use awareness-vision-transformation positively affect service performance and strategy (Hsu & Tsaih, 2016).

*Core values.* Lee and Keng-Boon (2015) and Warrick, Milliman, and Ferguson (2016) urged that core values relate to fair treatment, integrity, ethical behavior, teamwork, social responsibility, and community citizenship. BCD leaders coordinate their efforts based on the underlying core values to leverage and better meet the needs of future and current clients. Therefore, the executive director is responsible for communicating the MVV to the volunteers, partnering with schools and agencies, and families. Senior leaders of BCD publish the MVV on the organization's website, social media accounts, GuideStar, and internal publications. A portrayal of the BCD



organization's core competency, mission, vision, and core values, which the leadership established in 2000 (Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* BCD mission, vision, and values (MVV).

**Workforce segment.** BCDs workforce structure consists of four segments: (a) an ED (b) eight members of the BOD, (c) seven part-time staff employees, and (d) 15-30 volunteers (Table 2). The BOD is a governing body that has bylaws and acts as an advisory council for the direction of the organization. The ED and treasurer hold a bachelor's degree and have over 10 years of experience in leadership positions of NPOs. BCD has mandatory education requirements for specific positions; however, progressive professional experience can be a substitute for the degree requirements. The workforce contributes to the creation and successful delivery of BCD programs. The ED, treasurer, and BOD work together to review the yearly community and state-wide fundraising

programs as well as educational programs to build long-term relationships for the community.

The volunteers collaborate with the staff employees to spend time helping smaller NPOs or individuals gain knowledge about the emerging field of the use of animal therapy. The motivation behind how BCD leaders have organized the workforce into segments is part of the organization's mission and commitment to help children who face social, emotional, or educational challenges with the help of animal-assisted therapy. Senior leaders' passion for fulfilling the mission and growing the organization motivates the workforce to achieve the MVV, and have created over 300 assistance dog partnerships with children all over the world.

Table 2

*Workforce Segment*

Workforce segments	# of Employees	Educational Requirements
Executive Director	1	Bachelor's Degree (BA)
Treasurer	1	Bachelor's Degree (BA)
Board Members	8	MBA and Bachelor's
Part-time Employees	7	Diplomas and College Credits
Volunteers	15-30	Diplomas and Certifications

*Note.* Workforce segments and educational requirements.

**Assets.** BCD leaders most critical asset is their explicit knowledge, experience, and passion for what they do and their support for the youth. BCD leaders do not own any physical facilities. Training facility and public access sessions hold local communities. BCD headquarter employees use approximately 9,000 square feet of donated commercial space, used for its office space, programs, and training sessions. To perform their work-related tasks, each member of the leadership staff has computers for

home use when it is not feasible for them to get to the office. Assets also include puppies valued at \$500-\$1,500, \$20,000 in office equipment, approximately \$10,000 in reserves and investments, and maintains its website to generate funding from donors or sponsors to support the mission.

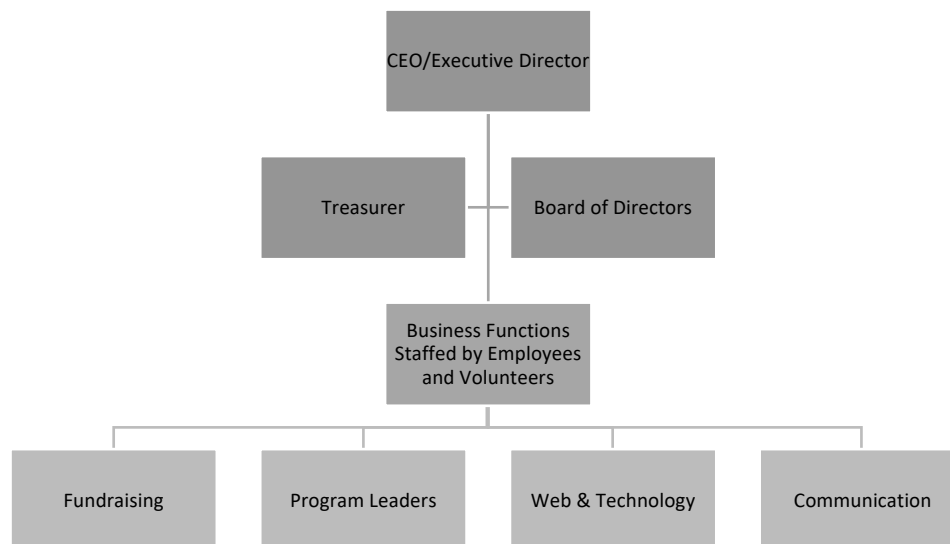
***Regulatory requirements.*** BCD is an IRS compliant licensed 501(c)(3) and a tax-exempt NPO. BCD leaders are required to annually complete and file IRS Form 990 to satisfy financial requirements. Leaders of BCD have safety standards for the pups. BCD senior leaders breed with careful consideration of safety standards, well-intentioned handlers, therapy animal organizations, and facilities measures without jeopardizing access to therapy animals (Jackson, Bikson, Liebetanz, & Nitsche, 2017). To ensure accuracy and compliance with federal and state regulations, the director administers oversight of operations and keeps accurate records of funding sources. BCD leaders comply with all applicable federal and state regulatory requirements, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and standards of practice in animal-assisted interventions. To ensure transparency of the organization, BCD leaders participate in GuideStar information services, which specialize in reporting on U.S. nonprofit companies (Morse, Roberts, MacIntosh, & Bordone, 2017).

***Organizational relationships.*** The organizational relationships associated with BCD are essential for senior leaders and the BOD to identify which functions need to be performed by the organization (Baldrige, 2019). The BOD relies on the ED to manage the workforce. The ED reports directly to the BOD and is responsible for all the organization's staff and operations. A review of the organizational relationships

associated with BCD, including organizational structure, customers, stakeholders, suppliers, partners, and collaborators, are provided in the following sections.

***Organizational structure.*** The organizational and governance structure (Figure 2) within the BCD organization is where reporting relationships are grouped based on the functional area. BCD senior leaders consist of the CEO/ED, BOD, and program leaders. However, BCD staff includes the CEO/ED, BOD, core personnel who manage operational aspects of the business, and employees who act as program managers (Figure 2). The BOD is responsible for assisting the CEO/ED with meeting the MVV through the policies and specifications in the bylaws. The BOD meets monthly to discuss progress toward goals, operations, and opportunities for revenue growth. The ED evaluates the performance of staff, part-timers, and volunteers that, in turn, assess the performance of all staff and coordinates with the ED. Figure 2 shows BCD's organizational chart. The BCD organization does not have a parent organization or a subsidiary organization. The BOD has eight members who act as an advisory council and provide oversight of the organization's strategic planning. The ED is responsible for BCDs strategy execution, day-to-day operations, the workforce, and the volunteers. The ED informs and reports to the BOD when they assemble as an entire group. The treasurer conducts quarterly meetings with the ED and BOD to provide updates on BCD organization finance. Organizational leaders use their website as their connection to clients and stakeholders to provide public access to the organization's mission statement, provide names of the ED and staff, details of programs, services, and the ability for donors to donate. All other part-time staff reports to the ED and are responsible for functional areas within BCD.

Volunteers do not have a daily or consistent functional role within BCD organization.



*Figure 2.* BCD's organizational chart.

**Customers and stakeholders.** BCD's primary customers are children with social and emotional challenges. BCD leaders engage families and customers by building a relationship. The leaders of BCD spend much time on the phone with clients/customers, sometimes sending personal notes in writing. Leaders of BCD haven written books and articles to educate future and current customers about the philosophy of dog therapy. Table 3 shows key customers and stakeholders of BCD responsible for ensuring and achieving the objectives of BCD.

Table 3

*Key Customer and Stakeholder Requirements*

Customer	Key requirements
Key Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Therapy animals to assist individuals and their families to be more independent</li> </ul>
Stakeholders	Key requirements
Staff members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full and part-time employees who are always ready, willing, and able to assist children with autism and families</li> </ul>
Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborates with director, employees, and volunteers with the new field of animal-assisted therapy</li> <li>• Support the MVV of the organization</li> </ul>
Local and out-of-state volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain credentials/certifications/licenses.</li> <li>• A commitment of six months.</li> <li>• Advocate for patients.</li> <li>• Demonstrate behavior to work well as a member of a team.</li> </ul>
Stakeholders/Company donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A shared understanding of expectations.</li> <li>• Transparency</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Knowledge of the essentials of day-to-day operations.</li> </ul>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperate with the day-to-day operations of BCD.</li> <li>• Provide support for BCD organizations to complete and maintain the mission and objectives of the organization.</li> </ul>
Federal government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide IRS tax exemptions, tax deduction, help with filling IRS Form 990 to satisfy financial requirements, and government grants.</li> </ul>

***Suppliers and partners.*** The primary types of suppliers are those that provide dogs, trainers, and training facilities used by the BCD workforce to serve children and individuals. Suppliers for BCD provide needed dogs, medical supplies, training, and nutritious meals to support the health of assistance dogs. The key partners, such as stakeholders and community leaders who have a shared understanding of BCD's

expectations for families and individuals. These partners work effectively and efficiently within the community with a shared understanding of expectations, collaboration, and knowledge of the daily essentials of BCD while helping to support the BCD mission, which ensures transparency. BCD leaders nurture existing partner relationships and develop new collaborative partnerships through consistent communication via e-mail, phone, social media, and face to face communication. Leaders leverage partnerships with a variety of local partners that share the ideals of BCD CEO/ED and staff. There is a collaborative relationship with local schools and organizations that share the mission to address animal-assisted therapy services

### **Organizational Situation**

This section of the study includes a review of the competitive environment for BCD. The organizational situation is the organization's landscape, which indicates what is happening around the organization. The strategic context that the leaders of BCD operate within, and the performance improvement system used to measure and assess the organization programs and their specific improvement needs follow this subsection.

**Competitive environment.** A competitive environment is the dynamic external system in which a business engages, competes, and functions (Jones, Davis, & Thomas, 2017). The more sellers of a similar product or service, the more competitive the environment in which the organization competes. In this regard, I reviewed the competitive environment for BCD. Also included below are the descriptions of BCD leaders' competitive position, changes in competitiveness, and a summary of competitive positions.

***Competitive position.*** BCD's competitive advantage has to do with its leaders focus on assisting children who face social, emotional, or educational challenges with the help of animal-assisted therapy. BCD leaders created kid/canine partnerships using well-bred and well-trained dogs as therapeutic tools for the children served. BCD leaders are to "differentiate" the organization's offering from others to engage and create value for clients in the market (Jones et al., 2017). Thus, leaders of BCD must carve out a spot in the competitive landscape, thereby putting a stake in the ground and winning mindshare in the marketplace. The leaders of the BCD organization noted there are no known organizations with the communities they serve that offer similar services to the types of children they serve. Instead, leaders at BCD organization are focused on being a bridge between the activities of a therapy session and a child's home program, providing familiar cues and structure to pragmatic language or increasing a child's security.

***Competitiveness changes.*** There are two types of competitiveness, namely: price competitiveness and structural competitiveness (Mahajan, 2019). Price competitiveness is the ability to create and offer quality goods and services at lower costs than competitors (Mahajan, 2019). However, structural competitiveness is the ability of an organization to impose its products or services regardless of their price, for example, to their quality, innovation, related services, or brand image (Mahajan, 2019).

Nevertheless, since 2019 BCD leaders have observed a growth in businesses offering similar products, which may introduce some changes in the regulatory environment, such as more requirements for caring for the dogs. Leaders of BCD stated;



therefore, they stay on the cutting edge by keeping up with research into assistance/therapy dog partnerships as well as the culture of the families receiving BCD's services. BCD leaders are doing this through searching for ways to improve and integrate communication strategies to ensure the training and program education presentations are relevant. BCD leaders acknowledge the need to increase their base of donors and recurring financial supporters to remain as a viable option for future customers.

***Comparative data.*** BCD leaders mentioned no need to keep comparative data before the recently emerging competition, collecting comparative and competitive data proved a challenge for BCD leaders. A significant challenge participant said they faced is the size of the organization, which is 100% family-owned, and the leaders felt they should only compare BCD to other family-owned businesses that were within reach of BCD's location. Consequently, there is little comparative data available that BCD leaders can use to compare their BCD operations and performance to other BCDs. Finally, no BCD in the same region has indicated significant success as a requirement for program participation, based on a search of GuideStar. Based on the lack of comparative data, BCD leaders should assess their own organization's effectiveness from several perspectives. Potential data sources for assessment include BCD program survey data and year to year comparison, standard performance measurement tools, financial measures, quality indicators, and quality-management framework assessments.

BCD leaders understand that some limitations and competitions affect the ability to obtain comparative and competitive data such as time, lack of volunteers, donors, together to meet the needs of the families with assistance dogs. Hence, leaders of BCD

acknowledge the fact that the organization's survival depends on the leader's ability to be ethical and legal in decision making. Participants revealed that using the comparative data assists the ED and BOD in assessing current processes and trends in the marketplace.

**Strategic context.** BCD senior leaders encounter factors that could impact organizational operations, performance, and services provided to families with children with emotional challenges. BCD senior leaders analyzes data and information monthly to evaluate the strategic advantage and challenges (Table 4). Specifically, the leaders identified four strategic challenges and five strategic advantages across the organization's operations and workforce that could hinder the organization's mission. Table 4 demonstrates the key strategic advantages and challenges for BCD that could affect the leaders' ability to expand services to the growing numbers of children in need.

Table 4

*Key Strategic Challenges and Advantages*

Area	Key strategic challenges	Key strategic advantages
Program and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting new donors</li> <li>• Loyal donors</li> <li>• Charitable lead trust</li> <li>• Training for the board of directors</li> <li>• Strategic decisions to support sustainable programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low volunteer turnover</li> <li>• Strategic funding sources</li> <li>• Meeting the requirements of 501(c)(3) protocol</li> <li>• Training and engagement of volunteers and families with assistance dogs</li> <li>• Satisfied families</li> </ul>
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinating various areas effectively such as the operation, marketing, finance, information, and human resource</li> <li>• Lack of quality management tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability to deliver products and services by promises made to customers</li> <li>• The ability to do things quickly in response to customer demands</li> </ul>
Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforce long-term stability</li> <li>• Difficulty of getting dog trainers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skilled and commitment</li> <li>• Dedicated volunteers of all ages</li> </ul>

***Performance improvement system.*** Currently, there is no formal performance improvement system that provides the BCD leaders and workforce with appropriate administrative guidelines for implementing formal performance improvement systems. However, formal performance improvement is a goal for most businesses and especially BCD. Performance data obtain on BCD organization's programs and services, operations, and workforce allow leaders to evaluate the positive impact to clients participating in the programs. BCD senior leaders are putting measures in place to implement a formal performance improvement system from 2020 and beyond.

### **Leadership Triad: Leadership, Strategy, and Customers**

The following section includes a discussion of the importance of the leadership triad, comprising of leadership with a focus on strategy and clients' needs. This section also demonstrates how leaders guide and lead the organization. BCD leaders who develop and implement an organizational strategy based on the community's needs, expectations, and requirements are the foundation for building a culture of performance excellence and achieving results that other similar organizations can emulate (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2019).

#### **Leadership**

The leadership section includes a description of how BCD leaders' actions guide and sustain BCD employees in fulfilling the legal, ethical behavior, and societal responsibilities to ensure responsible governance. The ED set the mission and guiding principles. Within the next subsections, I explained how leaders of BCD defined, organized, and implemented their vision and structure, and focus their programs to prepare the organization for success.

**Senior leadership.** BCD senior leadership consists of ED, treasurer, and 8 members of the BOD. These leaders provide organizational direction, leadership, and program delivery execution. The ED has served BCD in the current capacity since establishment 18 years ago. BODs are selected based on their alignment with the MVV of BCD; their potential professional contributions, and their ability to advise the ED. Current board members have participated with the organization for several years, driving the mission and providing leadership in the areas of legal guidance, finance, accounting,

and consulting (Table 5). The BCD senior leaders work together to review the current state of the organization, set goals for the upcoming year, sets objectives, and outline actions needed to reach the target goals for the next year. To demonstrate a commitment to the mission and ensure the workforce is striving for the same goals, the senior leaders engage with the workforce and key customers to create a work environment of positivity and effectiveness.

Table 5

*Board Structure, 2019*

Position	Area of expertise	Leadership roles
Executive Director	Establish good governance practices through board education and training	Update and ensure education qualifications
Board of Directors	Observes excellent practices in good governance with experiences in qualifications in veterinary practices and puppy breeding	Balances governance with learning
Program leaders	Ensures the highest quality; teamwork	Develop and retain quality staff

***Mission, vision, and values.*** BCD's core competencies include (a) integrity, (b) responsibility, and (c) being passionate about helping people drive change through action and by caring genuinely about the communities that it serves. According to BCD senior leaders, the MVV statement encompasses helping children who face social, emotional, or educational challenges with the help of animal-assisted therapy, assistance/therapy dog placements, and training service/support dogs on an ongoing basis for the benefit of the

community. Decisions regarding additions or changes to existing programs come from ED and support from the BOD.

***Promoting legal and ethical behavior.*** The senior leaders of BCD lead by example. Senior leaders understand that the organization must live by a higher standard to keep their workplace safe as well as effective, hence, BCD leaders include structures for training and development for staff employees and volunteers. BCD's sustainability depends on BCD's leaders' ability to be ethical and legal in making decisions that affect their ability to provide services to children with special needs. BCD leaders ensure that they are always working in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines.

**Communication.** Leaders of BCD communicate and engage new families, trainers, community partners, suppliers, collaborators, workforce, customers, and above all the donors using social media, BCD website, emails, weekly and monthly meetings, and community events (see Table 6). The BOD and senior leaders encourage collaborative work to enhance awareness and two-way communication to promote the MVV's of BCD. BCD leaders provide take-home information about the services and programs they offer to the children and family as required. Also, while encouraging transparency and two-way communication, leaders of BCD pay great attention to providing psychological support for the workforce and the families/children served.

Table 6

*Workforce and Stakeholder Communication Methods*

	BCD Website	Social Media	Emails	In-person Meetings	Community Events and Recognition
New Family	O	O	O	O	Q, A
Trainers	O	O	W, M	O	Q, A
Community	O	O	M, AN	M, Q	A
Partners	O	O, AN	AN	AN	A
Suppliers	O	O, AN	AN	AN	A
Collaborators	O	O, AN	AN	Q, A	A
Workforce Engagement	O	O	O	O	Q, A

*Note.* W = Weekly, M = Monthly, Q = Quarterly, A = Annually, O = Ongoing, AN – As Needed

***Creating an environment for success.*** The senior leadership of BCD believes in the vision to build social bonds between a child served and their family members as well as neighbors, their classmates, and members of their community, with training taking a back seat to intelligent socialization. Leaders of BCD consistently work with community leaders, new trainers, partners, suppliers, and collaborators to identify and address how a collaborative approach will enhance awareness and ensure transparency. BCD's ED and board chair-initiated processes focused on board engagement, accountability, and development of a strategic plan with all stakeholders in mind. During monthly board meetings, leaders provide updates on accomplishments and improvements needed. The BOD and leaders review a profit and loss financial report quarterly to determine financial stability and availability of funds for new families who face social, emotional or educational challenges. Leaders of BCD keep up with new research along with evaluating their own kid/canine partnerships. BCD leaders have implemented new concepts over the

past years up to the present day which serves as an indication that BCD is helping children and doing no harm in the process. Hence, BCD leaders intend to keep moving forward with the MVV to the community.

**Governance and Societal Responsibilities.** The following subsections include a review of BCD governance, including accountability, transparency, and operational elements. The BOD helps the ED in the governance of BCD organization. However, the roles of BODs guidelines include accountability of the board members.

**Operational governance.** The governance of BCD is currently managed by 8-member BOD with each member having defined roles and responsibilities (Table 6). BOD has the expertise as noted in Table 6 and ED, who exert control over the management of the organization with bylaws adopted from the inception of the organization. Leaders of BCD have not created specific committees within the board structure. The leaders prefer a functional board where the expertise of each board member contributes to the overall operations of BCD. The ED is responsible for compliance with the rules and bylaws of the organization. The ED has oversight of the BOD, and the roles of board members guidelines include the accountability of the board members and for all board members to act in the best interest of BCD. The role of the advisor of the board is to provide strategic counsel, promote inclusion activities, and create value for stakeholders. The governance system requires no less than three board members at a sitting meeting. During quarterly meetings, BOD leadership ensures that guidelines and measures determine each leader's accountability and performance for the optimum growth and success of the organization. The ED requires a biannual report from



grantees to ensure compliance and track the appropriate allocation of the funds to compile information for the IRS financial audits, 990 reporting, and tax returns. These reports must be signed by the grantee's financial officers and an internal review board, which gives BCD senior leaders the ability to both show and report back to donors.

***Performance evaluation.*** There is no formal performance evaluation process to determine the effectiveness of work processes, professional development, compensation, adding on more trainers or for the ED, BOD, staff or volunteers at BCD. However, the BCD board members and ED meet four times a year to evaluate the effectiveness of the services offered. BCD leadership uses a systematic way of providing feedback using improvement dialogues as a way for employees to play the role of catalyst for others, helping them to do better work and enhance their performance. The ED is responsible for providing feedback to the other members of the senior leadership team, staff, and volunteers. In turn, the senior leader participants noted that they try to supply information in a useful manner, either to support effective behavior or to guide someone toward successful performance. BCD leaders improve work processes via observation of measures of performance (such as client testimonies), and that enhances BCD's core competencies by properly evaluating all success as well as failure, circling back to written policies and procedures to update them when necessary.

***Regulatory and community concerns about products and operations.*** BCD leaders follow all applicable laws for a nonprofit 501(c)(3) in the Northeastern region of the United States including auditing all finances, filing IRS Forms 990, and sharing all IRS tax filings with GuideStar for public availability. Additionally, BCD leaders ensure

they work in compliance with the HIPAA guidelines that require a signature acknowledging a complete understanding of security provisions and data privacy, to keep patients' medical information safe (Farhadi, Haddad, & Shahriar, 2018). To mitigate organizational risk, BCD senior leaders use quality measures of assessment (QMA), feedback, and quality improvement standards (QIS) experiences, to proactively discuss any concerns at BOD meetings, and the director routinely reminds the workforce to bring forth any compliance or legal issues.

***Ethical behavior.*** BCD senior leaders promote and ensure ethical behavior through their actions to encourage respect and dignity during communication with all stakeholders. BCD workforce understands that the organization must live by a higher standard, and so leaders included structures for training and development for donors and volunteers to ensure BCD leaders invite ethics specialists to train the staff and volunteers on the importance of modeling ethical behavior in stakeholder interactions. After the training, staff, and volunteers sign and date the HIPAA consent form acknowledging a complete understanding. However, if there is an issue regarding ethical behavior, the ED addresses the issues by following the BCD Ethics and Compliance workforce conduct of conduct guidelines to ensure that the same problem does not repeat itself. A list of legal, regulatory, and ethical behavior compliance processes, measures, and goals are evident in Table 7. Table 7 illustrates that the ED achieves 100% ethical compliance for the entire workforce through training and development.

Table 7

<i>Compliance With Laws and Regulation, Ethical Processes, Measures, and Goals</i>					
Processes	Measures and indicators	Year			
		2016	2017	2018	2019
Annual internal and external audits	# of issues	100%	100%	100%	100%
Compliance with all regulations impacting HIPAA	% of signed acknowledgment	100%	100%	100%	100%
Compliance with state and IRS laws and regulations for nonprofits	IRS 990 Forms	100%	100%	100%	100%

***Societal well-being.*** BCD leaders' social and community connectedness is what drives success for the organization. BCD leader's programs provide service dogs, to accompany a child to decrease anxiety during medical or dental visits, school activities, shopping, and travel. BCD leaders and staff organize programs and services to make a positive impact on the lives of individuals living with autism, and their families, by providing exceptionally well-trained service dogs. BCD service dogs provide physical safety and emotional anchor for children with autism, which helps families to set individual yearly action plans and goals of increased independence and loving companionship.

BCD leaders strive to work in harmony and provide a great deal of thought as to how BCD fits into the community's surrounding in all the organization's partnerships to increase societal responsibility. BCD leadership engages in fundraising events and workshops free to the public to improve the needs of families with assistance dogs. To further enhance societal well-being, the BOD and BCD leaders provide an organization

of professional and volunteer individuals who embrace the endeavor of creating and supporting lasting partnerships between highly-skilled therapy dogs and the community of mankind with diverse impairments and disabilities, thus greatly enhancing their quality of life.

***Community support.*** BCD senior leaders consistently hold fun and educational presentations to strengthen communities. Areas of community involvement include:

- partnering with schools and school boards to improve education;
- partnering with health care providers to improve health in the local community by providing education and volunteer services to address public health issues; and
- partnering to influence trade, business, and professional associations to engage in beneficial, cooperative activities, such as voluntary standards activities or sharing best practices to improve overall U.S. global competitiveness, ethical, and societal well-being.

The leaders of BCD collaborate with other organizations and community stakeholders to identify concerns such as the utilization of each dollar donation and how donations to the organization are affecting the well-being of community members. The collaboration within the community helps to develop and encourage donors to donate resources with confidence, knowing that every dollar can provide some benefit to the community and eliminate emotional disparities among families.

### **Strategy**

The strategy section is a description of how BCD develops successful strategic objectives and action plans, implements these objectives and action plans across the

community, and achieve the organizational goals such as the MVV. This section demonstrates how the leadership of BCD focuses on organizational strategy and clients. NPO leaders with successful strategies establish a basis for individual excellence, results, and increased engagement with their communities and stakeholders.

**Strategy development.** Strategy development is a process that BCD senior leaders develop strategies for organizations. The ED help trains the senior leaders to think strategically to achieve excellence. Strategy definition includes planning, considerations for innovation and strategy, the definition of work systems and processes, and clarity and prioritization of strategic objectives relevant to organizational success and goals.

BCD leaders implement diversification strategies to grow funding sources, which helps to increase financial resilience and financial capacity while decreasing financial vulnerability and volatility. Leaders of BCD continuously execute the organization's mission to avoid a situation or face closure. Sustainable financial health is one of the primary concerns of BCD leaders, to ensure the longer-term survival of the organization and leader's ability to provide additional, as well as better, services to strengthen the community. BCD leaders conduct strategic planning annually during the beginning of every year in January. A review of BCD's strategy including information regarding the strategic planning process, focus on innovation, work processes, and systems, and strategic objectives are provided in the following sections.

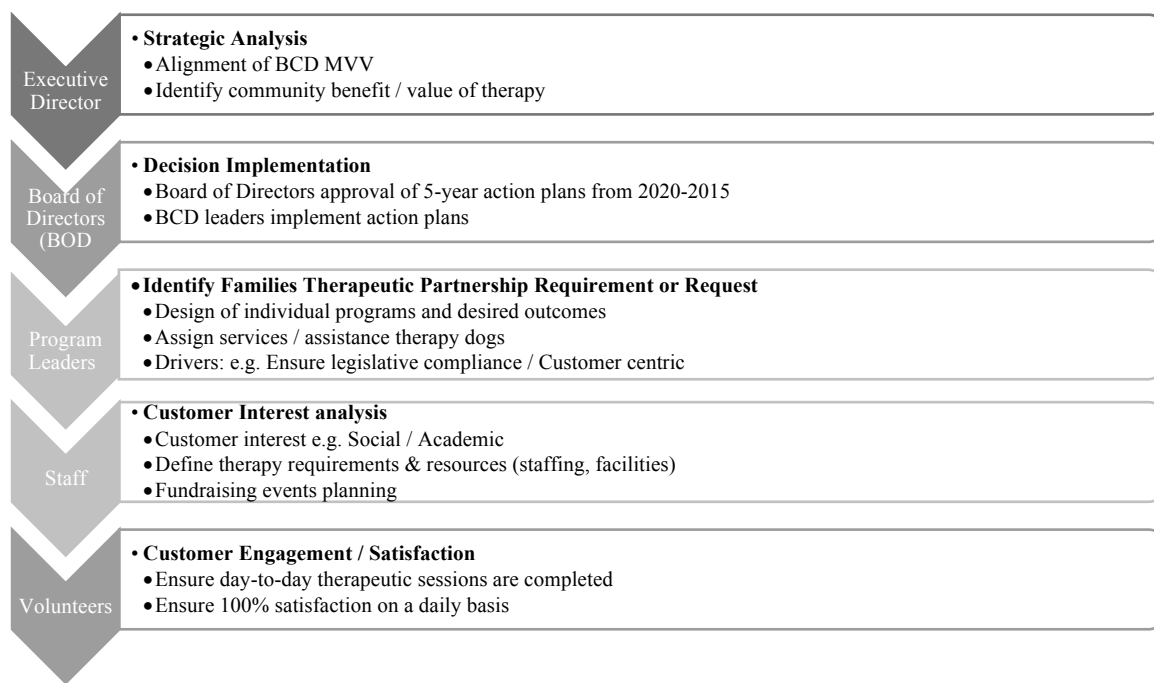
***Strategic planning process.*** BCD leaders use multiple strategies to execute their MVV and fulfill their commitment to deliver programs, adjust program content to align with current needs and define new strategies to expand the reach of their programs. The

strategic planning process (Figure 3), is used by the ED to create an environment for operational success. The ED leads the strategic planning process and provides the BOD, program leaders, staff, and volunteers with substantial input to the decision process to ensure there is broad engagement across the organization. The ED collects both historical and current data for the organization, which is evaluated for relevancy and then used during the strategic planning process. Before identifying the next year's strategic priorities, ED analyzes relevant data collected from observations and stakeholder testimonies. Next, the ED develops specific objectives, action plans, measures, and timelines to enable MVV realization and ongoing success. After setting the goals, action plans, and measures, the financial resources are allocated in the annual budgeting process to facilitate goal achievement. After determining the appropriate resources, the ED deploy and communicate the strategies and action plans to the BOD, staff, volunteers, trainees, and community collaborators to enable teamwork and collaboration toward a common goal. Lastly, the ED monitors financial impact to ensure the achievement of objectives and reports progress at the monthly BOD meetings.

***Strategy implementation.*** The ED of BCD meets with board members every month to discuss programs and fundraising events to meet the therapeutic needs of the community. The leaders of BCD then transform the programs discussed during the monthly board meetings into actionable items. The leaders of BCD consider rebuilding and progress of the organization, development, and expansion of the BCD therapeutic program, and recruitment of volunteer providers as short-term action plans. Senior leaders of BCD approved strategic plans for expansion during yearly meetings. BCD

leaders commented that approved plans (Figure 3) address a 5-year term beginning with the 2020 to 2015 school year to raise the number of puppies to assist families in need. BCD leadership determined the necessary donation and funding events and projects over a 5-year timeframe to accommodate families and individuals in need of animal-assisted therapy. The long-term action plans include moving the organization towards a professional setting and building long-lasting relationships with other organizations.

*Action plans and implementation.* Leaders of BCD noted that from 2020 and beyond will begin to deliver more than the usual 18 puppies per year (Figure 7). An expansion strategy includes fundraising events and online funding events beginning in 2020 (Figure 3). BCD leaders have also planned for future growth, by expanding the breeding of puppies to ensure a wider reach to the community and families on the waiting list. Senior leaders of BCD have expanded the breeding space to accommodate the increase of the puppies.



*Figure 3.* BCD's Strategic Planning Process.

The strategic planning process (Figure 3), demonstrates how the ED implements the strategic process steps to create an environment for operational success. The strategic planning process begins with the ED, BOD, and selected staff members. The ED leads the strategic planning process and provides the BOD, program leaders, staff, and volunteers with substantial input to the decision process to ensure there is broad engagement across the organization.

### **Customers**

The following sections explain the methodology used to build a more focused cultural relationship with customers and enhance customer loyalty; enabling customers to seek information and support; and manage complaints. The customer section describes how senior leaders engage customers to facilitate long-term sustainability. BCD leaders collaborate efforts to meet and exceed clients' expectations, and build relationships with



current and potential customers.

**Strategy implementation.** Strategy implementation of BCD involves the ED identifying, aligning, and communicating to management and staff of BCD's MVV so that all levels of employees and departments understand the implementation required to meet the NPOs' goals (see Figure 3). The ED aligns and coordinates efforts with program leaders to include finances, market, work environment, operations, full and part-time employees, and stakeholders of BCDs budget and produce various versions of the plan for all departments. If the ED's strategy focuses on lowering the cost of training a puppy and increasing the number of puppies, then program leaders, full and part-time employees will be well-equipped to focus and spend time on the current strategy and programs to achieve the goals of lowering cost. However, if the ED determines that new programs and new fundraising events are the most important strategy, then the implementation should include senior leaders of BCD to brief full and part-time employees so that anticipation of new program and events can be used in the marketing plan and communicated to existing families and potential individuals with animal-assistance need. Relaying BCD's values to the needs of families through programs and fundraising events will help BCD's brand image and attract a market share to produce revenue.

**Voice of the customer.** BCD Leaders develop processes for listening to their customers and determining their satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The goal for leaders is to capture meaningful information to exceed their customers' expectations. Among the ways for leaders to capture this information include listening to meaningful client's comments and managing complaints to exceed client's expectations and improve

marketing strategies. BCD uses the client's meaningful comments from emails as a form of communication and outreach.

***Current and other customers.*** The primary and ultimate customers at BCD include children and individuals with social/emotional challenges all over the United States and, on occasion, outside of the country. Before an active patient gets services from BCD organization, the leaders initially have the parent(s) of a potential client fill out a questionnaire, followed by a lengthy phone call, and a one-on-one interaction visit if the family is close enough to BCD office to make the trip. The active patients fill out the questionnaire to help leaders of BCD to make an informed decision if the individual/family is right for BCD services. BCD leaders listen to, interact with, and observe customers' interaction with the service animal to obtain actionable information to better serve the needs of the individual/families. Interactions, observations, and connections with families who are in treatment help determine the right therapeutic dogs in the concept BCD leaders have coined *temperamental fit*. BCD leaders work effectively and efficiently when customers who have concerns and communicate the process of resolution through emails to keep the customers well informed.

To improve the ability to partner with the right dogs, and after several decades out of college, the ED went to UConn to receive an MA in Educational Psychology to enhance the experience of families that must deal with emotional issues and be able to create therapeutic partnerships. Different families/children do better with different philosophies of placement, and thus BCD leaders understand who is right for their organization's services and assistance/therapy dogs. If the leaders of BCD realize that the

skills, education, and experiences of its staff are not appropriate to a family in need, the ED then refers the family to another organization to get the appropriate services because BCD services are not a one size fits all concept.

***Customer Segmentation and product offerings.*** BCD workforce is motivated and committed to meet the needs of all families and individuals enrolled in BCDs animal-assisted therapy programs. Over the past 18 years of BCD's evolution, its senior leaders have developed programs that provide the basic needs to clients and individuals with puppies to help during autism and anxiety moments. BCD leaders also provide personal dog trainers even after puppy placements to ensure that clients are bonding with their puppies. Some of the programs include weekly training of client or individual with the need of animal-assistance and the trainer while ensuring that the trainers are certified and have the required skills-set to operate in the best interest of BCD. BCD program leadership collaborate, engage, confirm compliance to BCD training procedure with the trainers to ensure that all clients a completely satisfied.

***Customer engagement.*** BCD's product offerings include animal-assisted therapy, assistance and therapy dogs, and education by way of visual presentations. BCD leaders seek donations or grants to support the placements the organization makes; these expenses include breeding costs, vet care, dog food, training expenses, and equipment. BCD programs also require funding for educational program presentations designed to promote tolerance for children and the challenges they face within their schools and communities. Additionally, BCD leaders determine customer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement through interactions between the clients and BCD by way of the written

word and phone calls with the client, as well as the trainer of BCD dog in question.

***Customer relationship and support.*** Customers enrolled in BCD animal-assistance programs can work directly with the program leaders and dog trainers for all information and support related to BCD therapeutic programs. The available support applies nutrition and feeding instruction, ensuring that the puppy is always present at the side of the individual with the need of animal assistance, keeping the puppy safe at the home, as well as helping young students with academic makeup work for students struggling to meet their grade point average (GPA). The program leaders and trainers collaborate to work together to provide focus and assistance for not only the individuals but also families due to the new addition of a puppy to the families. Also, in a few situations where necessary, a personalized learning plan created, and program leaders will work directly with the teachers and the students to help the students meet the mandated educational goals.

***Determination of customer satisfaction and engagement.*** Leaders of BCD send out evaluation forms for all kid/canine partnerships when they reach the level they aspire to (therapeutic level or full public access). BCD leaders obtain information on customers' satisfaction relative to other organizations because other organizations either do not evaluate placements of assistance dogs or do not share information publicly. Often, leaders, trainers, and volunteers hear by word of mouth about other organizations and on a few occasions read an article or watch a show about other organization's performance and the benefits or drawbacks to the community. However, leaders of BCD consistently encourage the evaluation of their placements of assistance dogs and readily share this

information with the public to help emerging organizations in this field.

*Satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement.* BCD leaders build and manage client relationships through direct communication and community events to improve on market segmentation. Although the client's complaints are minimal, BCD leaders help to manage client relationships and bring awareness to serve the needs of clients and families within the community. The tools that BCD leaders use to build customer relationships included videos to share online or individually with a family about their pup in training to minimize complaints. However, to address complaints, leaders of BCD implemented a QMA and QIS committee (see Figure 4) to resolve client complaints and to enable the ED to find out the root cause of the complaint, resolve the client's concerns, and later communicates to the client about the resolution through emails. BCD leaders reported that the organization did not have any data for complaints or incidents up until 2019 (Table 8). Additionally, BCD leaders spend much time on the phone with clients or writing to them to encourage and better understand the families and the community at large. The ED also writes books/articles to market BCD's philosophy of placement with families in need of therapeutic and emotional support.

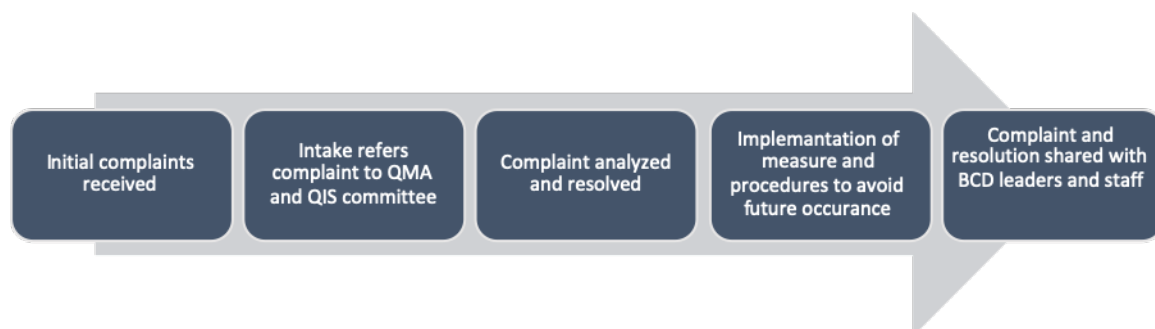


Figure 4. BCD's Complaint procedure and resolution.

### **Results Triad: Workforce, Operations, and Results**

The following section includes a description of workforce-focused processes, operational processes, to build an effective, and efficient work environment for accomplishing and supporting the workforce. The leadership focuses on strategy and customers. NPO leaders who develop and implement an organizational strategy based on the clients' needs, expectations, and requirements are the foundation for building a culture of performance excellence and achieving outstanding success (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2019).

#### **Workforce**

Leaders of BCD encourage a productive and supportive workforce environment of respect, trust, and collaboration. BCD leaders recruit new volunteers through community events, referrals from active volunteers, and using a link on their website. The leaders of BCD implemented training and feedback through a real-time learning process to achieve the goals at BCD.

**Workforce environment.** BCD leaders educate workforce carefully and monitor every activity entirely by way of the written and spoken word (by way of posts, calls, the use of social media), and encourage frequent and open communication with support workers along with the small poorly paid staff. Leaders of BCD do not actively recruit new workforce members beyond whom BCD currently have which is the ED, treasurer, program leaders, staff, and volunteers because BCD cannot afford to hire or recruit any more staff.

***Workforce development.*** The training, collaboration, and support techniques from BCD leaders provide valuable information to new volunteers to enhance workplace engagement. BCD hires local trainers for the dogs when they join new families. Leaders of BCD find certified trainers who use positive training techniques through the Association of Pet Dog Training (APDT) website. Leaders of APDT keep a current list of positive trainers on its website from around the country to enable BCD leaders to refer to when seeking a trainer to hire for a BCD family in need.

***Workforce engagement.*** To enhance workforce engagement, BCD leaders encourage and engage volunteers, trainers, and staff in an environment of trust, building healthy relationships, and organize appreciation ceremonies to boost morale. For example, BCD leaders pay great attention to the psychological support for any worker and respect the need for all to travel and provide learning curves to understand this emerging field. BCD leaders also pay attention to the physical environment at the work premises by ensuring proper fire drills, monthly fire inspections, and monitors sprinklers for emergencies. The ED also administers additional training regarding safety at the work environment to all employees, BCD's dogs, and puppies as well as children who visit, to ensure everyone is comfortable and safe. Figure 5 outlines the strategies leaders use to engage the BCD workforce.



*Figure 5.* BCD's Workforce engagement strategies.

### **Operations**

The following section is focused on operations, including a description of how the organization designs, implements, improves and innovates through the education-based programs. Operations also include elements of operational effectiveness used to deliver value to students and customers, while delivering operational success. I used the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (2019) on all aspects of operations and overall success.

**Work processes.** Workforce processes at BCD include organizational actions, including fundraising events, and recruitment of program leaders, volunteers, and certified dog trainers. BCD leader's work process requirements vary according to an individual's need, and as a result, BCD does not have a systematically documented process requirements program. Senior leaders of BCD have no structured timeframe in which they determine and designs work processes and process requirements, instead, the ED plans services and programs to meet the recipient's needs by analyzing data, gathering BOD, workforce input, and identifying trends based on feedback from previous



customers. The subsequent section contains an analysis of how BCD leaders to design, manage, and improve essential products and work processes.

***Key workforce processes.*** BCD's leaders' key work processes are to form teams to ensure that day-to-day operations of work processes. Leaders of BCD coordinate departmental efforts to meet the process requirements of safeguarding the child or animals that support BCD senior leaders' operational success. ED and BOD engage in activities for the benefit of the individuals who need animal-assistance to assess the day-to-day processes of the organization, identify key support processes, and improvements to benefit organizational competencies and operations.

***Product and process design.*** Leaders of BCD determine and address essential key work processes and system design requirements mostly by trial, error, review, discuss, analyze, and resolve work processes through process management and ensure improvement within the supply chain. The daily operational activities are specifically designed to support the key work processes needed to achieve the mission of BCD. However, if the key product and work process requirements at first fail, the leaders further analyze why and develop innovative strategies to resolve issues by finding out the root cause and try again with an alternative strategy. For example, getting BCD ISO certified is helping to improve work processes at the organization. Figure 6 depicts the key work processes including referrals, available dogs, and delivery of services. Referrals are received daily while the request for fulfillment and delivery of services occurs only when dogs are available. Because the workforce at BCD is mission-driven, fulfillment and delivery of services may not take place immediately if no dogs are ready to partner

with an individual.

According to BCD records, 360 kid/caine partnerships has been established since 2019, using well-bred and well-trained BCD dogs as therapeutic tools for the children served annually (Figure 7). The 360 kid/canine dogs averaged 18.06 annually costing approximately \$22,000 per fully trained dog. Figures 6 and 7 delineates the results of the number of kid/canine dogs from 2015 to 2020 and the approximate annual increase in the product distribution process is about 16% to 17% therapy dogs.

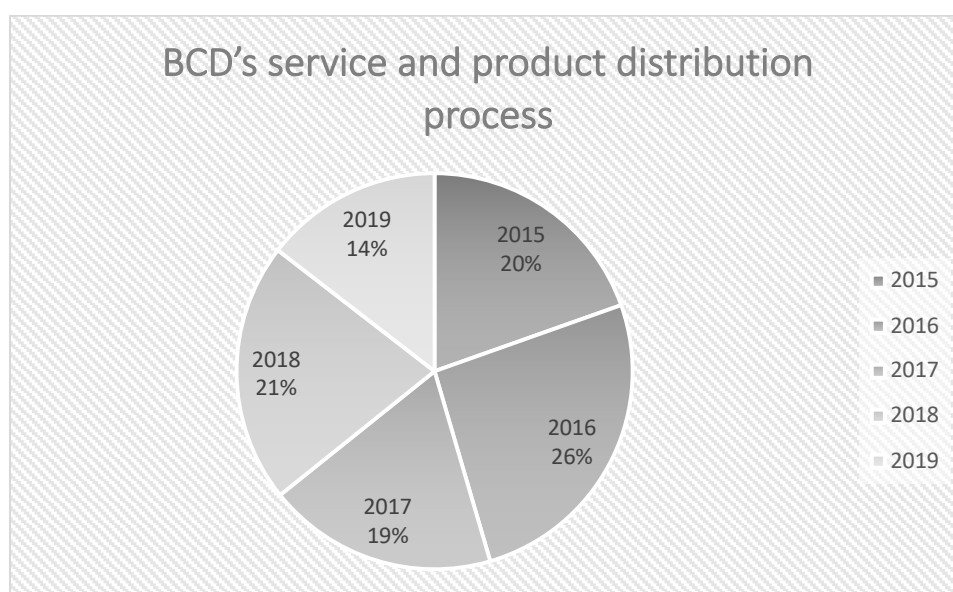


Figure 6. BCD's service and product distribution process.

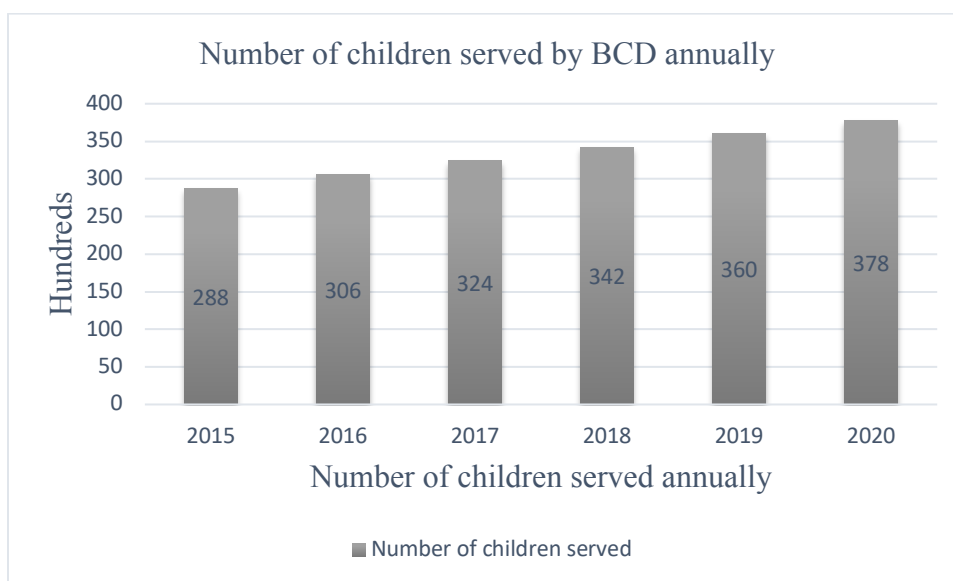


Figure 7. Number of children served annually from 2015-2020.

**Work process management and improvement.** Leaders of BCD determine key support processes by writing intelligent policies & procedures based on experience and learning the most from the organizational failures. BCD leaders have written policies and procedures that serve as a guideline to determine essential product and work process requirements in the development of the assistance and therapy pups, as well as developing relationships between the pups and their children. BCD board leaders meet quarterly to review the decisions made and provide feedback for improvement within the supply chain.

The ED incorporates technology, organizational knowledge, and VOC as part of the design process by choosing to provide services that are recipient-friendly and safe. The ED practices good financial stewardship by acquiring services at little or no cost. If services needed by an individual is unavailable, the ED either chooses to forgo providing services to save financial resources. The senior leaders evaluate and refine work

processes and support processes, incorporating stakeholder input, to ensure ongoing operational efficiency and effectiveness.

***Training process management.*** The senior leaders are in the beginning stages of developing and implementing process management and performance measures for all areas of importance, while the ED supports and empowers the workforce to solve problems at the time of occurrence. The ED uses training sign off sheets, open communication, and meetings to ensure that all staff members meet work process requirements. The training process involves using innovative strategies at BCD to create value for customers and achieve current and future organizational success. BCD leaders help to improve work processes and enhance an understanding of how to meet the needs of clients and family members to ensure long-term value where clients live freely without any fear of anxiety.

***Innovation management.*** To improve products and performance, enhance its core competencies, and reduce variability, BCD leaders capture innovative ideas and best practices by attending webinars and conferences. The design of services and training of the therapy dog component of the program has greater variety, which encourages each dog trainer to invest in positive dog training techniques for their interest. With this variety, the ED provides different tools and mediums that the trainers and staff can utilize to achieve their defined and agreed-upon goals. Innovation and knowledge exchange are critical for BCD business success. The senior leaders of BCD claim the organization is in a constant state of evaluation regarding the incorporation of new organizational knowledge, service excellence, customer value, consideration of risk, and the potential

need for agility. Senior leaders rely on the ED to evaluate and grant for selection of participants in the BCD program; hence, using the knowledge and skills of key personnel to consider and select new endeavors and target innovation and technology are the keys to BCD efficiency in their target market.

***Supply-chain management.*** To manage its supply chain, BCD leaders work diligently in expanding the breeding program to meet increased demand. BCD leaders design, manage and improve its active breeding program while making critical decisions to ensure improvement in the year to year services to families. Senior leaders of BCD, volunteers, and dog trainers must sign an agreement to guarantee that all service provider's values, and training techniques align with the mission of BCD before working for BCD. Although there is no formal tracking and evaluation of breeder performance or feedback provided on improvement opportunities, the ED evaluates supplier performance on the attainment of agreement, and when necessary, replaces suppliers who consistently fail to perform on intended promises or align with organizational MVV.

In summary, BCD leaders rely on a dedicated program-centric workforce to own the implementation of BCD programs. The program workforce liaises with BCD leaders to ensure timely, effective and efficient management, as well as monitoring of BCD services and programs across the participant base and recommends adjustments to program delivery where they are required. BCD leadership holds regular strategic meetings with the BOD and invests in time with (potential) external donors to develop additional support for BCD services, programs, and objectives.

**Operational effectiveness.** Review of organizational effectiveness includes

information regarding process efficiency and effectiveness, management of information systems, and safety and emergency preparedness. BCD leaders focus on operational effectiveness to ensure sustainability. The ED also coordinate departmental efforts to exploit operational effectiveness and achieve ongoing success.

***Cost efficiencies and effectiveness.*** Efficacious management of cost is essential for the substantiality of the BCD. The ED engenders an annual budget to orchestrate expenses and implement controls and ratified by the BOD. BOD members review and analyze a financial report from the treasurer quarterly to ensure accountability and transparency to all stakeholders. As leaders of a nonprofit, the senior leaders must be effective capital builders and raise enough revenue to pay members of the workforce and the expenses required for fundraising and support efforts. The organization's ED and treasurer are mindful of the budget and controlling it is a portion of their work. The senior leaders survey the budget month to month and ask for proposition preparation that controls investing. The budget is established at the annual strategic planning meeting based on the historical information of the prior year's campaign and event donations raised. Thus, the ED controls costs through an annual budget process, however, a constant state of promotion of services is used to generate the funding required to meet the mission. Changes in services or dog placement are not always planned by senior leaders but initiated by the workforce as a *see-understand-act*. BCD does not have warranty costs or customers' productivity losses. The ED emphasized the importance of staying within the boundaries of the annual budget and view cost control as a top priority to meet mission goals as a NPO where individual out-of-pocket costs and donations are

the revenue source. BCD's BOD is also trying to put policies in place to control overall costs of operations, such as ensuring that travel fee does not become part of placement fee or to limit responsibility by sharing travel fees with clients.

***Management of information systems.*** To ensure effective management of operations, leaders of BCD use management software that enables the organization to manage customer profiles, tracking supporter's information, relationship tracking for better insights leading to better leverage for fundraising needs, pledge and recurring gift automation and easier data management to increase donor engagement. Particularly sensitive data on client information such as names, date of birth, and other personal data are secured within the system, reducing the potential for client private data exposure. The use of technology solutions reduces the violation of HIPAA risk. To ensure effective and efficient security as well as the cybersecurity of sensitive or privileged data and information, BCD leaders use passwords and cloud-based storage facilities for safekeeping of information and to keep client confidential information private. Furthermore, to ensure the reliability of BCD's information systems, leaders of BCD meet initially with clients in-person to get to know their needs by way of questionnaire and a phone call to triple check client's impressions of BCD in terms of suitability of work to enhance the quality of life.

***Safety and emergency preparedness.*** To ensure that individuals' health information is properly protected while allowing the flow of health information needed to provide services (Farhadi, Haddad, & Shahriar, 2018). The ED ensures that the staff comprehends the organizational policies to maintaining a safe work environment:

workplace practices and dog handing procedures. BCD leaders also thoroughly ensure a clean bill of health for any puppy that comes to BCD before it goes to a client by way of proper vetting and breeding practices. There is not a formal emergency or disaster plan in place; however, the senior leaders of BCD provide the staff and customers with a safe environment to perform their jobs and build a relationship with dogs. When program leaders notice signs of a puppy not relating and responding to an individual's emotional development, the ED is notified and may decide to delay the partnership and ensure that staff closely monitor the interaction until conditions improve, or direct training specialist to intervene. In the event of a declared reconsideration of dog placement, the ED removes the dog from the environment. Regarding the delivery of services, senior leaders do not approve that an animal is exhibiting distress during the bonding period because the focus must remain on the mission, providing critical support to children in need.

### **Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management**

The following subsection is a description of how BCD select and use data and information for performance measurement, analysis, and review in support of organizational planning and performance improvement. The ED use review findings and organizational learning to achieve high levels of performance. Minutes form departmental meeting also helps the ED in review of BCD performance.

#### **Measurement, analysis, and improvement of organizational performance.**

The leaders of BCD review financial reports and information discussed in monthly meetings such as organizational planning and performance improvement to track data and information on daily operations. The leaders of BCD do not conduct formal



surveys or use comparative data to support fact-based decision making. The absence of comparative data may limit leaders' ability to project future performance. The leaders of BCD use the information discussed in quarterly and annual meetings as well as their financial reports to track data and information on daily operations. The treasurer who is also the financial director takes care of all financials and communicates this data at board meetings.

***Performance improvement.*** The CEO/ED acknowledges that market growth in acceptance of animal therapy dogs for children with autism is experiencing exponential growth in the number of children receiving services annually. Senior leaders have no formal performance measurement system in place. After the selection of a performance measurement system, the senior leaders intend to collect and align information relative to daily operations and overall organizational performance. In some cases, the ED tracks data and information manually through spreadsheets. For example, the ED utilizes spreadsheets to track available puppies, the associated max capacity for children served, the number of trainers, and the number of presentations scheduled in a quarter. The spreadsheet illustrates the need for additional puppies and trainers by location to timely meet the needs of the child. At the beginning of each quarter, the senior leaders update the service delivery tracker.

As the need for visibility of the organization increases, BCD senior leaders expect to grow as they work towards achieving the vision continuously. The CEO/ED mission to serve as many as 10-20 new children, each year, thus leaders of BCD will need to expand workforce capacity and capabilities through increased partnerships, donors, market

segments, and staffing. The ED noted the value in securing the support of new community advocate support on social media as the vehicle of communication. Senior leaders address capacity and capabilities through annual performance evaluations of staff, trainers, and volunteers.

**Information and knowledge management.** The following paragraphs are a description of how senior leaders manage organizational data, information and organizational knowledge. I used the Baldrige Excellence Program (2019a) to explore the client organization's information and knowledge management for best results. BCD senior leaders manage organizational information and knowledge, including data and information, data quality and availability, for best practices, and learning.

**Data and information.** Leaders of BCD ensure the quality of organizational data such as client information management for the benefit of BCD business needs in real-time. BCD leaders often conduct many short and impromptu meetings to discuss information and how to best use organizational assets to help the children BCD serve. To verify and ensure the quality of organizational data and information management, leaders of BCD work carefully with integrity to keep data current and never fudge any data or findings so that no wrong information will go to external sources. Therefore, to eliminate risk exposure of patient information and ensure health insurance portability and accountability act compliance, leaders of BCD developed access levels that designate a user's authority within the organizational data and information management system. To ensure the availability of organizational data and information BCD leaders use open communication and a collaborative approach to build, share, and manage any information

anyone requests about BCD to ensure transparency.

***Organizational knowledge.*** Leaders of BCD share written and visual materials including (a) minutes from meetings, (b) accounting data, (c) client data, (d) program details as well as spending lots of time communicating with others upon request about BCD's work. Leaders of BCD also share information with external stakeholders at quarterly and annual community collaboration meetings. The ED of BCD and BOD also determines the type and amount of information shared with external sources from BCD's website, social media and community events. Above all, leaders of BCD use experience, market intelligence knowledge, and resources to embed learning in the way it operates by educating recipients of animal assistance therapy services because this has always been an essential part of BCD's mission, and it is second nature to BDC leaders to educate others daily.

***Organizational learning.*** To build and manage internal organizational knowledge, the ED identifies and records processes in organizational policies and procedures, and updates the documents when changes occur. BCD staff use cross-training methods during the onboarding process, to orient and train all volunteers in vital functions to facilitate compliance with organizational policies and procedures. Through the identification of best practices gathered from donors, webinars, conferences, publications, and training sessions, the senior leaders present suggestions for improvement during daily huddles, weekly team meetings, and one-on-one sessions with the ED.

### **Collection, Analysis, and Preparation of Results**

BCD leaders operate the nonprofit six days a week with 100% staffing. The leaders of BCD collaborate effectively and efficiently to improve emotional outcomes for families with children with anxiety. Since BCD's being acknowledged as an NPO in 1999, the leaders of BCD have met the emotional needs of more than 325 families that cannot afford the needed financial care on a limited income. See Appendix D for an overview of the project time line.

### **Product and Process Results**

BCD is a registered 501(c)(3) NPO and was initially granted the NPO status in 1999 as illustrated by Morse et al. (2018). Leaders of BCD and staff offer a therapeutic remedy to children who have developmental differences such as autism, anxiety, and by using a specially bred and trained assistance or therapy dog. BCD leaders are committed to helping children reach their social, emotional, and educational goals using animal-assisted therapy which ultimately provides long-term relief to families.

BCD's product offerings include dog training programs, in-person, and telephone therapy sessions, therapy and assistance dog placements with children and facilities and the need for animal-assisted therapy programs. Over the past 18 years, BCD has created 325 kid/canine partnerships using well-bred and well-trained dogs as therapeutic tools for the children served. Since the inception of breeding and whelping program, the numbers of children served by BCD have increased exponentially as a result of the annual \$22,000 awards or grants through BCD's product offerings (Figure 8). The CEO/ED measure the success of their services and programs by the number of children served annually.



Figure 8. Awards/Grants (Special events). Note. BCD data not formally tracked before 2015.

In addition to the number of children and individuals receiving services, the ED and BCD leaders used data from the partner referral services and BCD questionnaire to determine service options that will meet the most essential desires of the children. The ED coordinates departmental efforts to meet the need and desire of the children. The information provided on the questionnaire or referral form is used as indicators and alignment between the wants of the kids and the services provided utilizing senior leaders at BCD through the current programs.

***Work process effectiveness and supply-chain management.*** Available dogs limit capacity and restrict senior leaders at BCD from measuring all aspects of work process effectiveness. Measurements for the effectiveness of the available dogs and work process include the timeline of referral to dogs released to new owners, funding, placement of therapy dog after animal temperament testing. Referrals from agencies such as local schools and NPOs are filled using a first in first out approach. Senior leaders leverage

partner relationships, acquiring donations and sponsorship to maintain an average of 18 puppies annually for distribution (Figure 7) to help a family who needs assistance with the cost of securing a dog and services from BCD. BCD leaders reported using special events and donations campaigns to ensure the service goals are met by the organization's target objective to have placed 378 puppies with families by 2020.

Data revealed the resource challenges faced by some nonprofits, creating inefficiencies because of the multiple roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers. Fundraising work process management in the form of training and documented work processes may provide structure for key work processes and alleviate strain on staff members and volunteers. The ED view fundraising as a time-conscious activity aimed at influencing corporate sponsorship and individual donors to gain financial means intended for the support of BCD's MVV. Senior leaders do not have a formal process to collect donor data from each activity, however, collecting donor data and using that data to compare and assess event performance may reveal areas for improvement of processes. However, senior leaders focus on ensuring that the attendees use word of mouth advocacy. The increase in annual budgets implies that BCD's revenue is increasing thus, resulting in positive fundraising support processes. The ED is in the process of evaluating partners, in which no formal process exists. However, BCD senior leaders ensure that the values of prospective partner organizations align with the MVV of BCD. The ED is working on establishing more in-depth metrics for measuring the performance of the mission. Figure 9 illustrates BCD has continued to increase the number of sponsorships awarded for the past 5 years.

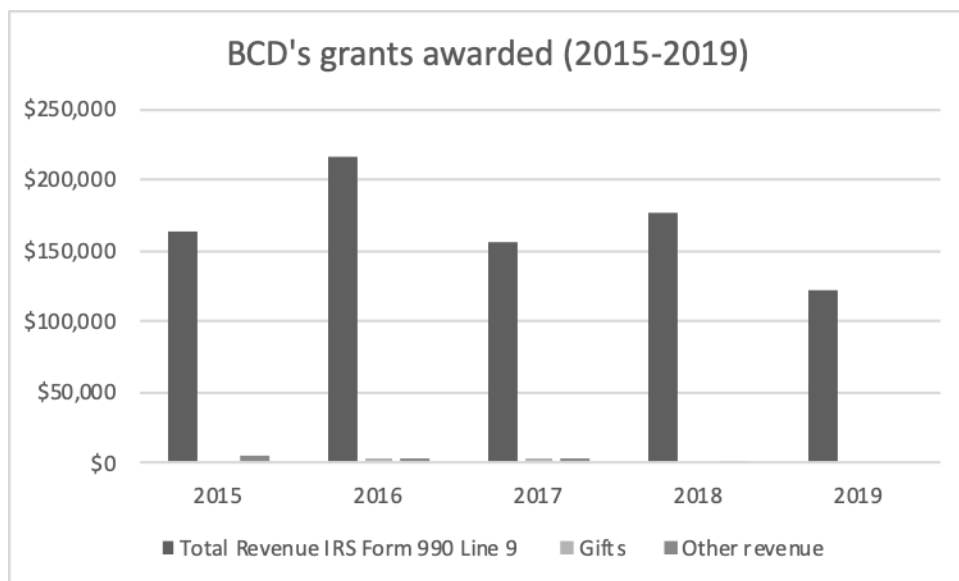


Figure 9. BCD grants awarded (2015-2019).

***Safety and emergency preparedness.*** All members of the workforce, whether volunteer or paid staff, have a responsibility to maintain a safe working environment. Although a formal process for evaluating safety and emergency preparedness manual does not exist, senior leaders ensure that the safety, work environment, and conditions, operating environments of BCD's offices, as well as the sites of the training sessions, are secured with locks on the doors and windows. Maps are available at each entrance on the property showing evacuation routes in the event of an emergency. BCD leaders work diligently to inspect the sprinkler and fire systems monthly and fix any issues promptly to ensure the safety of the workforce. BCD leaders also practice fire drills semiannually to ensure rapid response in the event of a fire outbreak as demonstrated in Table 8.

BCD ED administers additional monthly training and works in expanding the breeding program to meet increasing demands. BCD leaders currently design, manage and improve its breeding programs while making critical decisions to ensure the safety of

those participating in training services year to year. Table 8 depicts a positive four-year with zero incidents related to safety during BCD training sessions and there has not been any animal training incident before 2016. Senior leaders retain copies of the signed staff and volunteer incident reports. In the event of an emergency such as a biting, the ED uses a master staff and volunteer list to initiate notification calls if necessary.

Table 8

*Safety and Emergency Preparedness Results*

Incident Type	Success measure	Year			
		2016	2017	2018	2019
Animal Training/Temperament	# of incidents	100%	100%	100%	100%
Fire Inspections	# of incidents	100%	100%	100%	100%
Fire Drills	# of incidents	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sprinkler Inspections	# of incidents	100%	100%	100%	100%
Monthly Training	# of incidents	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Customer Results**

Customer satisfaction with the results delivered by the BCD programs has been very positive. Although the organization had limited records of customer results over the years, BCD leaders are committed to doing further research on its therapeutic educational programs. Leaders hoped to build new evidence that the therapeutic program is useful and supports the BCD leaders' commitment to reducing completely anxiety levels of children where their programs are in use.

The leaders of BCD listen to, interact with, and observe customers obtain actionable information carefully to better serve the needs of the families with the right therapeutic dogs in a concept they have coined *temperamental fit*. Leaders of BCD also



send out evaluation forms for all kid/canine partnerships when they reach the level they aspire to (therapeutic level or full public access). BCD leaders obtain information on customers' satisfaction relative to other organizations because other organizations either do not evaluate placements of assistance dogs or do not share information publicly. Often, leaders, trainers, and volunteers hear by word of mouth about other organizations and on a few occasions read an article or watch a show about other organization's performance and the benefits or drawbacks to the community. However, leaders of BCD consistently evaluate placements of assistance dogs and readily share this information with the public to help emerging organizations in this field. The leaders of BCD build customer relationships using videos to share online or individually with a family about their pup in training to minimize complaints as noted in Figure 3 above.

**Customer engagement.** BCD leaders acknowledged a formal process does not exist in determining the client's satisfaction and dissatisfaction, to resolve this, BCD leaders reported a plan to implement formal processes during the fiscal year 2019-2020. At the end of a presentation and dog placement parents of the children will receive a Likert-scale survey where they may indicate their level of satisfaction with the services received. Although senior leaders do not generate formalized tracking and reporting of feedback results customers are encouraged to provide feedback on BCD programs and services by way of the written word and phone calls with the staff as well as the trainers of BCD dogs. The results from the customer feedback have prompted senior leaders to seek opportunities to obtain customer relationship management tools. Although senior leaders commented they are not formally tracking donors via social media, a review of

BCD's social media and the website showed consistent and daily posts from senior leaders as well as two-way communication in the form of responses to followers' comments. Reciprocity, thanking donors and sponsors for their contributions are an example of strategies that senior leaders use to engage partners and build communal relationships.

### **Workforce Results**

**Capacity and capability.** The BCD workforce is essential to the success of the organization, and without the team, children may not receive the help necessary to cope with social and emotional challenges. Although BCD leadership does not have a strategy that calls for specific workforce expansion, the leaders do have a functional model that identifies the staffing required to deliver existing programs to families when they need for services and program increases. The CEO/ED acknowledged the need to increase capacity when the vision of the organization transformed to include expanding throughout the United States of America in 2020 and the inclusion of international services in 2020 and beyond. BCD leaders added organizational capacity by recruiting a dedicated volunteer workforce consisting of 15 paid staff and volunteers (Table 2).

**Workforce engagement, development, and performance.** BCD leaders use customer inquiry and referral data to adjust processes, training, and staff expectations. BCD leaders' workforce staffing plan is revisited regularly and updated as the customer demands of the nonprofit grows and changes. The key to this process is the BCD leader's employee engagement. The ED of BCD organization ensured that the MVV and objectives are real and meaningful to people they serve and employees they hope to

attract. Staff and employees, as noted by the senior leaders of BCD, are made to feel that their work makes a difference. BCD leaders have developed an onboarding and training plan for staff that addresses workforce development. Senior leaders are continuously developing measurements and reviewing data from one-on-one feedback from staff and volunteers to continue to enhance the work environment within BCD nonprofit business.

### **Leadership and Governance Results**

**Leadership results.** According to BCD senior leaders, The ED supervises and controls all the business affairs of the organization and is responsible for implementing the policies. The board also authorized the ED with fiduciary responsibilities on behalf of the nonprofit. The ED of the BCD to perform duties authorized by the BOD. BCD ED is required to disclose financial statements and observe tax regulations typical of all 501(c)(3) nonprofit business and file an IRS Form 990, annual returns of organization exempt from income tax. In compliance with the IRS, the chair, board members, and ED directors maintain independence, avoiding any conflicts of interest, and BCD leaders and staff must abide by written policies that include bylaws and principles. The ED, chair of BOD, and other board members meet monthly to discuss issues in an open dialogue of information exchange and updates of the nonprofit's activities.

**Governance results.** BCD's processes for governing consist of the ED ensuring transparency in governance and accountability through annual external audits. Due to the small organizational size of BCD, the ED with assistance from the BOD maintains 100% compliance with all laws, regulations, and accreditation as a 501(c)(3) (Table 9). The ED achieves ethical compliance for the entire workforce through educational training and

during orientations. Each staff member signs a code of conduct and completes a confidentiality and nondisclosure agreement (Table 9). As leaders of a fully operational and licensed NPO, BCD senior leaders adhere to regulatory requirements. The ED and senior leaders ensure ethical compliance through ongoing training and development of staff and volunteers as well as obtaining signature acknowledgments of the BCD code of conduct agreement (Table 9). BCD's by-laws, including amendments to the by-laws, according to state corporation law is developed and adopted by BCD leaders.

The ED and senior leaders use the by-laws as the business's internal operating laws. The nonprofit's leaders abide by the stated by-laws in governing the organization's activities. The BOD provides the overall direction for the ED of the nonprofit's business and affairs. The board meets at a minimum of twelve times a year. The chair or a majority of board members may call for special meetings throughout the year. Currently, the BCD board has not appointed an advisory board at present.

Table 9

*Governance Results, Ethics, and Compliance With Laws and Regulations*

Leadership function	Indicator of compliance	Year			
		2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Governance</b>					
<b>External financial audits</b>	# of issues	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Laws, regulations, and accreditations</b>					
<b>Compliance laws and regulations for NPOs</b>	IRS 990 forms	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Ethics</b>					
<b>Code of conduct</b>	% signed	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Note.* BCD data not formally tracked before 2016 and there has not been any violation incident before 2016.

## Financial and Market Results

Financial performance measures are essential to expanding the mission of the BCD Organization, and senior leaders monitor results to ensure organizational stability. The ED reviews financial results, outlined in the strategic plan (Table 9) with the BOD monthly to ascertain progress towards goals, objectives, and action plans. Revenue derives from contributions, and special events (Table 10 and 11), with the largest percentage of funds deriving from donated goods or in-kind contributions (Figure 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13). According to BCD senior leaders, there was the need to diversify the organization's funding sources and the ED added more funding events in 2017, resulting in a revenue growth rate of 11.49% in 2018 (Table 10). The leaders successfully increased sponsorship from corporations and foundations through the development of personal relationships for most years shown (Table 11), resulting in a 52.74% net gains from 2016 to 2017 which is 6% increase (Figure 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13) from 2015 to 2016.

Table 10

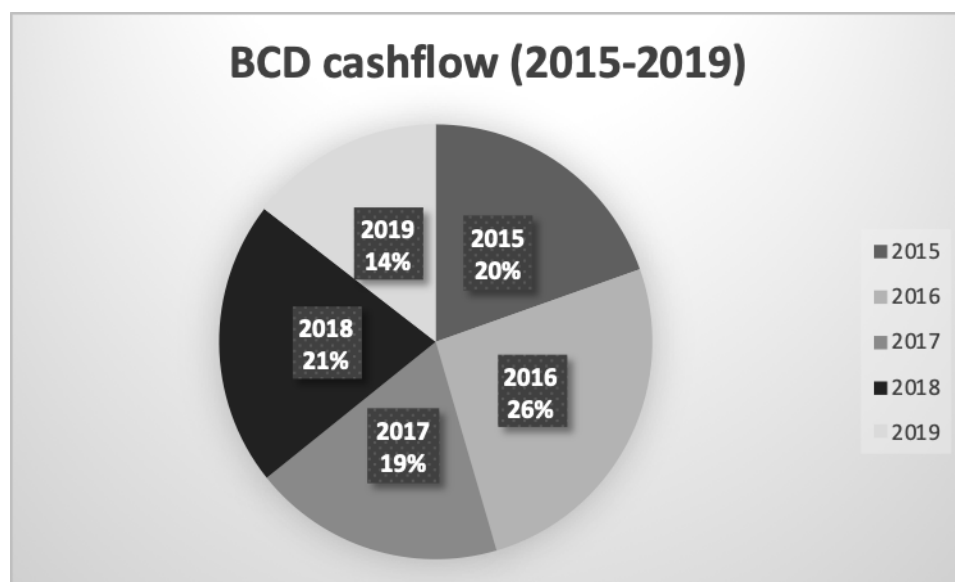
### *Net Income Trend, 2014-2017*

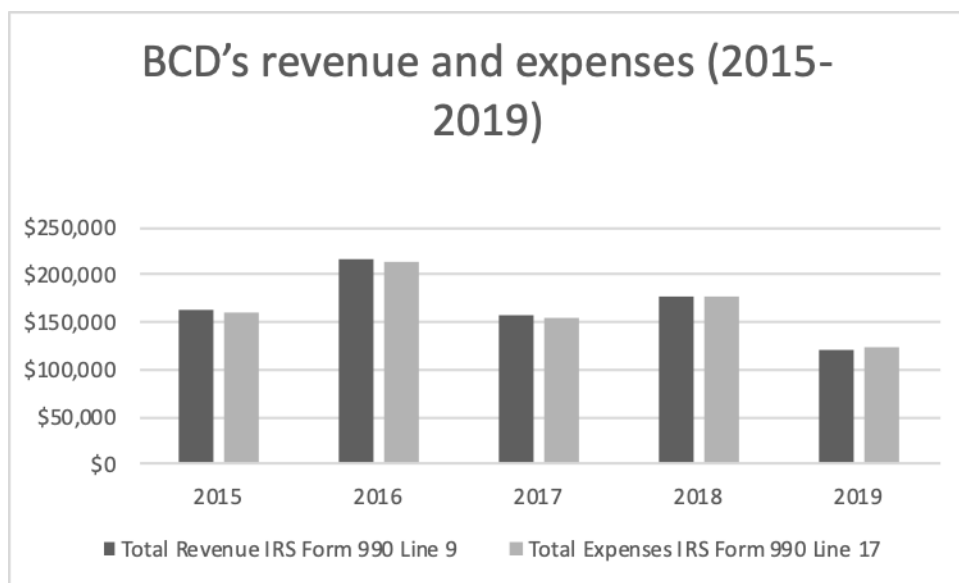
Year	Revenue	Expenses	Net income	Y toY change (%)
2016–2017	\$114,985	\$118,359	(\$3,374)	–85%
2015–2016	\$133,835	\$129,864	\$3,972	25%
2014–2015	\$258,704	\$242,642	\$16,062	N/A

Table 11

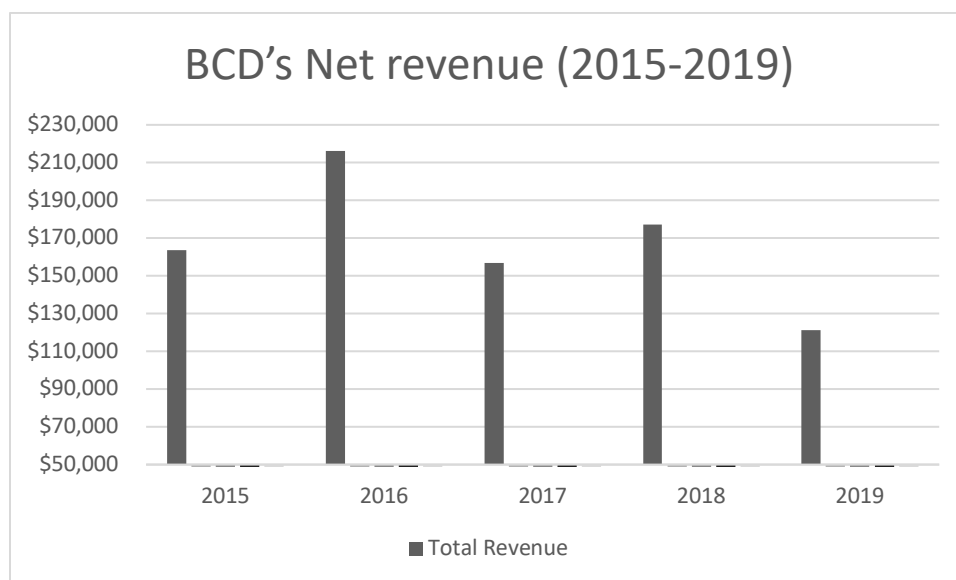
*Net Income Summary (Revenue vs. Expenses), 07, 2017- 06, 2018*

Fiscal year: July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018	
Revenue vs. expenses	
Total revenue:	\$114,985
Contributions	\$25,114
Government grants	\$0
Program services	\$89,871
Investments	\$0
Special events	\$0
Sales	\$0
Other revenue	\$0
Total expenses	\$118,359
Program services	\$118,164
Administration	\$195
Fundraising expenses	\$0
Net gain (loss)	(\$3,374)

*Figure 10. BCD cashflow (2015-2019).*



*Figure 11.* BCD's revenue and expenses (2015-2019). This figure illustrates the factors that are considered when developing the annual budget.



*Figure 12.* BCD's Net Revenue (2015-2019). This figure illustrates the factors that are considered when developing the annual budget.

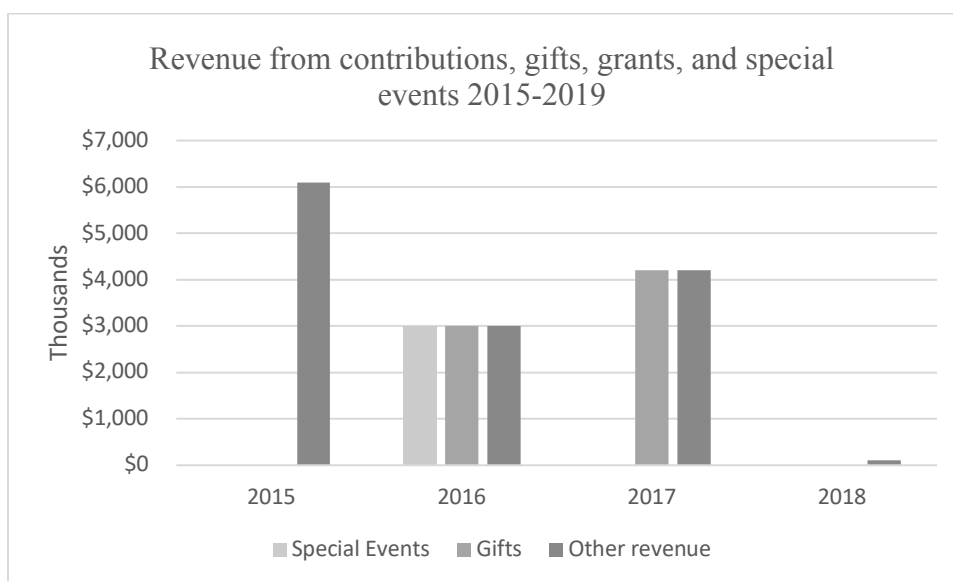


Figure 13. Revenue from contributions, gifts, grants, and special events 2015-2019.

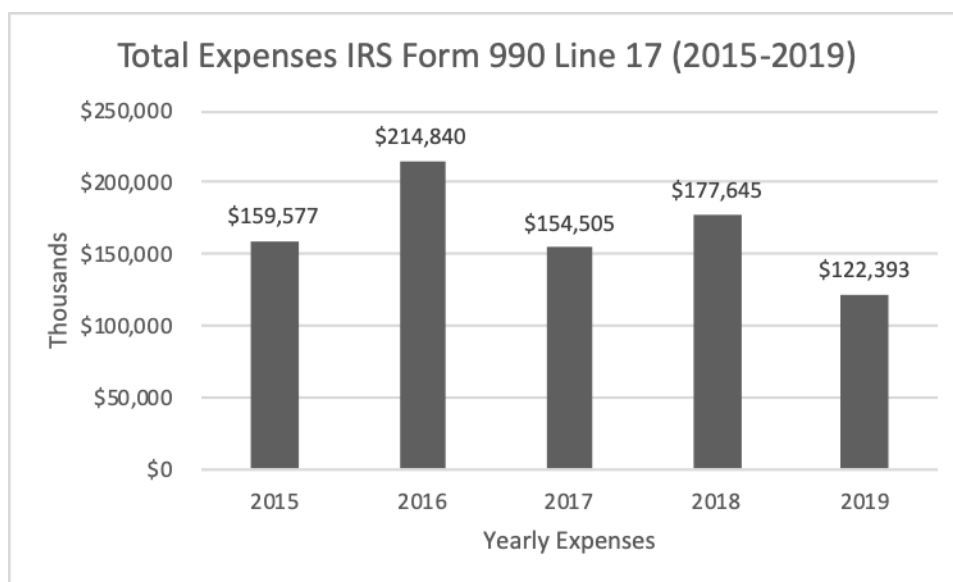


Figure 14. Total Expenses IRS Form 99 Line 17 from 2015-2019.

The ED uses total revenue compared to total expenses (Figure 11) and the percent change in total revenue compared to the percent change in expenses as indicators of financial health (Figure 11). From 2015 to 2016 (Figure 12), revenue increased by 6% and expenses increased in 2016 by over 74% however in 2017, expenses reduced at a



lesser rate of over 61% in 2017, indicating improved financial performance through the better management of organizational costs. BCD's percent change for revenue and expenses (Figure 11), ranging from 50% to 50% thus breaking even with revenue and expenses for any given year, differs year-to-year based on sponsorship contributed, gifts, grants, and special events.

To guarantee financial health for long-term sustainability, the senior leaders of BCD needs a surplus of funds to expand the mission and as well as unforeseen economic hardship. Unrestricted surplus as a percent of expenses is an indicator of long-term profitability and financial health. Because the office space is donated, no liabilities are offsetting the effectiveness of organizational assets, thereby improving the financial health of BCD. BCD leaders do not track performance measures relative to marketplace performance and market share.

### **Key Themes**

The following key themes incorporate process strengths and process opportunities for improvement at BCD using the evaluation factors of approach, implementation, learning, and integration. An approach enables leaders to create a repeatable process, enable learning, and deploy the processes across the organization (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2019a). The learning process comprises of evaluation and improvement cycles that leaders use to generate organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and integration is the harmonization among processes, plans, measures, actions, and results (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2019a). The final paragraphs include a description of the result's strengths and results opportunities for

improvements using the evaluation factors of levels, trends, comparisons, and integration, mentioned in the collection, analysis, and preparation of results section.

**Process strengths.** After reviewing and analyzing the participant transcripts, documents, and BCD website and assembling the data, the analysis revealed process strengths that appeared in the Baldrige Excellence Framework. BCD leader's process strengths include product and work process requirements in the development of the assistance and therapy pups, engaging customer relationships between the pups and their children, as well as senior leaders exhibiting successful behavior which provides an example for future succession. Another major process strength of leaders of BCD also includes helping children who have developmental differences such as autism, or children who face emotional challenges such as the loss of a parent or undue anxiety.

BCD board leaders meet quarterly to review the decisions made, evaluate performances by senior leaders and provide feedback for improvement. Monthly and weekly collection and review of program status enable BCD leaders to evaluate the current workforce engagement and program progress at any point in time. Senior leaders of BCD and program leaders capture discussions and feedback on processes to ensure that children who have developmental differences such as autism, or children who face emotional challenges, trust in the therapeutic program staff and therapeutic program objectives.

The highest value process opportunity includes organizing more fundraising activities to support for BCD programs. If successful, additional dog trainers will be hired and there will be an expansion of the breeding program to ultimately provide the needed

animal-assistance therapy for clients on waiting lists. Additionally, implementing these programs of recruiting and expansion of the breeding can create a corresponding increase in individual academic success and willingness to cope with society.

BCD leaders engage families and customers by serving their needs and building a relationship with them in meeting the psychological needs of children and parents. BCD leaders utilize a two-way communication system and recognize the efforts of the puppy trainers to promote BCD's MVV's. Khan et al. (2019) and Ludwick et al. (2018) advocated that internal drivers of motivation such as social recognition, using supportive supervision, and constructive relationships could improve engagement of workers without being dependent on funding for financial sustainability.

Macnamara and Gregory (2018) noted that achieving organizational objectives calls for a more open, dynamic, and expanded approach to facilitate two-way communication of strategy and strategic intent as well as its implementation. The ED builds, collaborates, and develops a systematic approach to determine satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement of trainers. An additional process strength of BCD's leaders includes consistent and transparent communication, internal and external, as well as recognition of volunteers, and sponsors via social media. Khan et al. (2019) and Ludwick et al. (2018) advocated that internal drivers of motivation such as social recognition, and using supportive supervision and constructive relationships, could improve engagement of workers without being dependent on funding for financial sustainability. BCD leaders use social media platforms and their website as a form of external communication to potential clients and inform stakeholders of weekly events

through the ED's Blog. Strong internal communication is significant to BDC leader's ability to focus on board engagement, accountability, and developing a strategic plan with their workforce. Lack of board involvement, understanding board dynamics, the role of accountability in governance, and decision-making by BOD appear to reduce director engagement during meetings (Bezemer, Nicholson, & Pugliese, 2018). During monthly board meetings, which serve as an additional strength to BCD, leaders provide updates on accomplishments, workforce feedback, and process improvements. The leaders of BCD also engage in community networking approaches with similar NPO leaders. This strategy has resulted in increased sponsorship donations and public support from the community, necessary to obtain the funds for organizational stability and MVV fulfillment.

**Process opportunities.** Leaders of BCD identify process opportunities for innovation and improvement through best practices gleaned from partners. After an in-depth analysis of semistructured interviews, financial statements, client demographic documents, the BCD company website, board minutes, promotional material for potential clients and stakeholders, and community involvement, I identified orientation emergent themes for process opportunities to improve; these are demonstrated in Table 12. BCD leaders identify process opportunities through the strategic planning process each year, after a thorough review of the community therapeutic needs, current conditions, and potential changes.

Table 12

*BCD Processes (Both Existing and Potential) That Could Be Refined*

<b>Processes that do not yet exist include</b>	<b>Processes that exist but could be refined include:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic plans with measurable goals to help children who have developmental challenges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A systematic approach to improve work processes via observation of measures of performance, evaluating all success as well as a failure with an update when necessary</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal educational training for dog trainers to use software management system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A systematic approach to determine satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement of trainers;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a formal survey or process to determine client and parent's satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance BCD's website accessibility and social media presence;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Succession planning strategies to develop new leaders;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build, develop, and transform leadership development;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop train, and orient new BOD to fill key roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing donor support</li> </ul>

BOD and senior leaders acknowledge the importance of succession planning. The importance of having specific and measurable goals and ways to ensure success in forming new or renewed developments to creating new resolutions may help leaders' to effectively and efficiently engage with other departmental leaders to resolve developmental challenges to achieve shared goals and objectives. Although BCD leaders plan strategically, there is no formalized organizational driven process, which results in the creation of an official strategic plan. Resulting in the organization currently not having specific, measurable, and achievable outcomes or goals to ensure success at BCD.

Most directors of NPOs are accountable for progress in reducing high-risk that can impact client growth (DeJong, 2016; Finkel, Walters, & Corbett, 2018). The leaders of BCD use a traditional way of training to handle software management systems such as customer relationship management (CRM) aimed at innovation, growth, and sustainability of the organization. In terms of succession and sustainability, the concern that the ED might need a successor to the organization was not found during the research but is worthy of consideration as part of the BCDs long-term analysis. The ED mostly provides considerable leadership, direction, and feedback recognition for full-time and part-time employees as well as other stakeholders within the community. BCD's ED also needs to consider recruiting new leadership or board members with fundraising innovative experience to complement that of the ED organization's processes and programs.

Furthermore, BCD leadership can invest in training of employees and allowing them to take the desired courses and certifications through e-learning resources, software and online tools in software development enhance growth, sustainability, and a succession plan of the organization as noted by Postelnicu, Darie, Scarlat, and Trifan (2019). On this note, leaders of BCD already have a software system that helps with appointment schedules with current and potential clients but then the ED indicated that the strategic innovative growth is helping to reduce and prevent trial and error from previous experiences.

Dissatisfaction, frustration, and disengagement of employees happen when the learning environment is indifferent to employees' psychological needs and thus

developing a formal survey or process to determine client satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement is crucial towards continuous growth and sustainability within the community (Cheon et al., 2019). The supportive environment allows employees to experience less dissatisfaction, frustration, and disengagement (Cheon et al., 2019). Another process opportunity identified for improvement exists with a systematic approach to improve work processes via observation of measures of performance, evaluating all success as well as failures with an update when necessary.

The ED and participants of the study noted that the efficiency of management, adequacy to integrate innovative approaches, easy cooperation between all departments, systematic data collection, and gathering tools, will help to contribute and improve the planning process. Moreover, developing a formal process for determining effective and efficient management through an exit interview protocol may provide leaders of BCD with strategies to improve work processes via observation of performance and evaluation. The ED team's performance and the organization's outlook are direct reflections of the leader. Therefore, leaders who can commit to empowerment and creating change will build, develop, and transform more productive teams and will build long-term growth for their organization (Pentareddy & Suganthi, 2015).

A formal process of succession planning minimizes employee turnover intentions which are another process opportunity identified for improvement because if the ED quits breeding dogs, someone must be able to take over. Succession planning thus enhances employee job security and creates a career attitude that mitigates the risk of employee turnover intentions (Ali & Mehreen, 2019). The leaders of BCD can implement a

succession plan to develop, train, and orient new BOD to fill key roles within the organization. Above all, the leaders of BCD can initiate formal training to increase accountability and develop a clear plan on the direction of the organization with measurable goals to improve growth, innovation, and sustainability.

Table 13

*BCD's 2019 Social Media Performance*

Social media Contacts	# of Users
Daily virtual reach	163
Daily page engagement	100
Daily comments	10
Daily average post received	120
Likes (unique users) lifetime totals	4890

**Results strengths.** A result strength of BCD leaders demonstrates the development of assistance and therapy pups, as well as beneficial relationships by extending daily hours between the pups and prospective clients to ensure performance with the mission, key strategic challenges, and disadvantages, financials, community, and other stakeholders (Table 4 and figure 10 above). Leaders of BCD indicated that more attention to the primary medical healthcare needs of clients enables the organization to serve clients with therapeutic needs much better with fewer visits to the business premises for help. BCD leaders reported that to ensure a continuous supply of puppies for the community's therapeutic needs, BCD organization as at 2019 to 2020 owns four breeding females and one breeding male with the annual placement of 18 puppies and in 2020, BCD is going to begin DNA testing to better protect the BCD's *brand* of dogs (Figure 8). On this note, revenue or donations that BCD receives represent 50% (figure



11) of the service area operating within the community with revenue between \$0 and approximately \$216,000 annually in figure 11.

BCD leaders thus engage families and customers by serving their needs and building a relationship with them in meeting the psychological needs of children thereby demonstrating a commitment to clients' well-being. Additionally, the increase of community networking approaches by BCD leaders with other organizations, collaborating with the BOD, and stakeholders by spending a good amount of time helping smaller NPOs to get up the learning curves of this emerging field emerged as one of BCD's strengths. BCD leaders reported that in 2018 and 2019, an increase in community events contributed to greater awareness of BCD organization, leading to an increase in social media presence (Table 13).

BCD website received an average post of 100 likes and 10 comments (Table 13). BDC leaders focused on board engagement, accountability, and development of a strategic plan with all stakeholders. Finally, although BCD leaders reported and experienced a decline in revenue in 2017 as in Figure 10 above, however, 2018-2019 data above and Figures 12 and 13 indicate encouraging revenue receipts compared to other similar organizations indicating that BCD's impact in the community is producing growth and sustainability.

**Results opportunities.** Although most of the organizational results presented show beneficial levels and trends, the senior leaders and ED of BCD are in the beginning stages of integrating performance measures for all areas of business, operational, and financial importance. The senior leaders acknowledge the lack of performance measure

analysis as a method to drive performance improvement and strives to increase the number of dogs and capacity to accomplish more animal therapy partnerships and analysis of measures essential to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction. BCD leaders reported that the organization had no formal policies and procedures that provide the BCD leaders and workforce with appropriate administrative guidelines for implementing formal performance improvement systems. However, BCD leaders mentioned that the ED is taking the necessary steps to implement formal performance improvement systems after the research recommendations and beyond.

BCD leaders also lacked comparative data which other NPO leaders use such as GuideStar and Dogsbreedscenter as a source of competitive and comparative data for BCD. Additionally, NPO leaders use comparative data from the National Association of Free and Charitable organizations to offer information regarding the comparative and competitive data of organizations such as BCD. Moreover, there were no results demonstrating workforce engagement, workforce capability, innovative strategic funding programs for the past 2 to 3 years, making the trending of performance for statistical data difficult. For ongoing innovative success, continuous growth and sustainability, the ED acknowledges that due to the lack of adequate records such as donor retention, donor recognition, workforce engagement, workforce capability, current and innovative funding activities, performance measures together with evaluations, will be implemented to enable leaders to compare the growth of the organization with other similar nonprofits.

The BCD Organization has 4,890 friends on social media and average on a post on their social media platform receives 100 likes and 10 comments as demonstrated in

Table 13. Lee, Jang, Lee, and Oh (2016) posited that improved search engine accessibility, increased relevance between site content and search engine keywords, and improved site credibility enhance the usefulness of the techniques for maximized exposure. BCD leaders reported that social media data were unavailable at the time of this research and thus, Table 13 only illustrates BCD leaders' social media performance inception. BCD leaders indicated that social media performance data will now be captured for subsequent use from 2020 onwards. Additionally, BCD leaders commented on a plan to organize more educational programs post this research to enable families and donors to share and contribute information to the benefit of the general public.

***Social media presence.*** Leaders of BCD should improve their social media presence and leaders of BCD have impressive social media engagement followers and results and with this advantage, BCD leaders should research effective and efficient social media strategies to reach out to potential donors and clients. BCD leaders must increase the company's MVV statement on various social media outlets to daily hours of operation, services, and programs to reach more clients beyond the state lines thereby ensuring an increase in potential client engagement and satisfaction.

***Promotion of the brand.*** Leaders of BCD should consider future opportunities to increase the production of their promotional materials. BCD leaders should invest in the production of promotional materials such as t-shirts, mugs, grocery bags, cups, hats, key holders, and pens with the organization's logo and mission to help increase funds and raise animal therapy dogs to help children with autism. Finally, BCD leaders' financial results show the organization operates with minimal resources and as such, leaders of

BCD should consider implementing and increasing funding activities at least once a month to drive performance improvement and increase workforce capability.

### **Project Summary**

The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to explore strategies that nonprofit senior leaders use to retain donors for their organizations. As a participant in Walden University's consulting capstone, I worked with an assigned client NPO. Within this study, I reviewed external information and internal information of my client, BCD Organization. The population for this single case study comprised of the chair of the BOD and three leaders of a NPO based in the Northeastern United States who have implemented successful strategies to retain donors.

I used the transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978), and the 2019 Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2019a) as my theoretical lens and template. To gain an understanding of the operations and identify gaps in processes and procedures, I gathered data from semistructured interviews with the three leaders, reviewed internal and external public documents, and analyzed known 501(c)(3), within the client service area. Data collected and analyzed resulted in the identification of four themes: process strengths, process opportunities, results from strengths and results opportunities. Through the research process, the CEO operationalized a new organizational structure.

I provided leaders of the client organization with strategic recommendations to improve and retain donors. The results reflected participants' perceptions of leadership, strategy, customers, measurement, analysis, and knowledge management, workforce,

operations, and organizational results for a NPO located in the Northeastern region of the United States. NPO leaders who read this single-case study may use various innovative strategies to grow their NPO's funding sources to retain donors for their organizations, thus increasing their financial stability, health, resilience, capacity, and ability as leaders to increase services for their communities while decreasing their financial vulnerability.

### **Contributions and Recommendations**

The results of this study may be when disseminated and implemented through conferences and training workshops, may provide leaders with practical strategies to improve and retain donors. The contributions to business practice include the data analyzed and information learned to promote and enhance the transformational leadership strategies of leaders of NPOs as it relates to retaining donors. The contributions to social change include the client organization learning additional innovative strategies and processes to improve and retain donor contributions, thereby helping to ensure leaders engage in programs and activities designed to help acquire and develop continued leadership skills to improve organizational ability and to meet the needs of their communities effectively as well as ensuring growth and sustainability. Additionally, this study may reduce volatility in donor contributions, avoid dependence on sole-source revenue streams, and identify opportunities to increase flexibility in support of organizational goals and objectives to increase services for NPO communities while decreasing their financial vulnerability. Moreover, this study may benefit nonprofit and for-profit organizational leaders in improvement using the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. (2019a).

BCD leaders should develop and integrate a succession plan just in case the ED decides to quit. Besides, expanding BCD's mission would not be possible without help from collaborators, community and social media presence. Collaborators, partners, community members, and suppliers offer diverse services and products through effective donor communication which is more than just sending out routine appeals and thank you letters. BCD leader's appeals should be strategic, targeted, and most of all personal to potential donors. Leaders of BCD must develop strategies to ensure expanding the organizational mission and to do so with help from devoted and enthusiastic partners, suppliers, and collaborators. Partners, suppliers, and collaborators offer innovative products, services, artificial intelligence, marketing, and support all in the interest of cutting down costs, thereby ensuring financial growth and sustainability. Through these interactions, the ED can create a sustainable breeding network to expand services to neighboring communities and cities, while lowering costs associated with breeding and training of puppies. BCD leaders must continually build extensive relationships with partners to garner new and innovative strategies to help achieve strategic priorities and safeguard ongoing organizational success. For these reasons, I recommend that BCD leadership must continue to extend the network of partners, suppliers, and collaborators, create more community awareness and events for the organizational mission, vision, and values.

I recommend that BCD leaders extend donor networks by segmenting communication to promote donor cultivation through prospecting, one-time donors, recurring donors, and major donors. Donor networking communications keep donors

inspired to give. Thus, by personalizing messages to a donor's history with the organization, BCD leaders can create a better connection to retain donors. When BCD leaders are communicating with major donors, it will be beneficial to communicate with the MVV because doing so will let donors know that they are part of something big and that the donations make a big difference in the community with the decision to donate. Communicating with major donors will often have a positive impact and have a personal connection to the cause, and that connection eventually should guide the donor outreach and prospecting.

Furthermore, my recommendations for future implementation include BOD succession planning to set the protocols for donor engagement and revenue creation to establish accountability and to reduce the cost of breeding. Similarly, my recommendations include implementing an active social media donation awareness, implementing business intelligence, and developing a stewardship section on the website and social media account that can appeal to both one-time donors, recurring donors, and young donors. Finally, I recommend that future researchers within the same region, could replicate this research and use multiple case study methods to identify strategies to retain donors.

Lastly, to the academic community, I recommend that researchers explore how leaders use an alternative conceptual framework, such as organizational performance, strategic management, or transformational theory, to explore how NPO leaders can use innovative donation retention strategies to achieve long-term sustainability past 10 years of operations. Besides, when researchers use an alternative theory, there is the potential

for an alternative perspective about strategies to retain donors. Additionally, the use of a mixed-methods approach, in conjunction with the Baldrige Excellence Framework, may furnish some tangible and actionable data for leaders of small NPOs related to the effectiveness of using innovative strategies for retaining donors to ensure growth and sustainability. Lastly, I recommend that future researchers use a multiple case study method to validate the effectiveness of the strategic retention of donors within the same region.



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## Appendix A: Interview Protocol (Research Question)

**Interview Title:** Nonprofit Leaders' Strategies for Retaining Donors

**Protocol:**

1. The interview protocol begins. This protocol works for both telephone and in-person interviews. Introduce self to the participant.
2. Pre-Condition: The study participant senior leaders will have previously read the Consent Form for Senior Leader Interview and provided their consent via e-mail, agreeing to participate in this research.
3. If telephonic, I will either call into the agreed upon a phone number or have the participating senior leader call the agreed upon phone number.
4. I will arrive early enough to set up the room and to ensure the room is private enough for the interview.
5. Script before the interview:

*My name is Robert Enchil. I want to thank you once again for being willing to participate in the interview aspect of my study. As I mentioned to you before, my study seeks to explore strategies that you, as a senior leader of the BCD Organization, use to retain donors for their organizations. Before participating today, you consented to have the interview audio-recorded. Do you still consent to audio-recording? I will transcribe the audio-recording and provide you the transcription for you to clarify and verify. Once you agree to the transcription, I will use that information as part of the case study. I intend to keep the interview to no more than 60 minutes.*

6. I will provide the participating senior leader with the information on how to withdraw from the study.
7. I will provide information regarding the member checking process that will occur after the interview. I will transcribe the audio-recording and then schedule a synchronous or an asynchronous follow-up meeting for the participating senior leader to review the transcript to ensure the reliability and validity of the data.
8. I will turn on the digital audio recorder, and I will note the date, time, and location of the interview. I will also include a second digital recorder as a backup. I will have writing utensils available to take notes.
9. I will introduce the participant to his or her alphanumeric code for the identification or with a pseudonym (e.g., SL1, SL2, SL3) on the audio recording.
10. Note the current date and time and then I will begin the interview.
11. I will begin with question #A and will follow through to the final question
12. I will end the interview sequence.
13. I will thank the participating senior leader for his or her time and participation in the study.
14. I will reiterate my contact information for follow-up questions and any concerns from the participating senior leader.
15. I will set an initial follow-up date for the member-checking.

16. I will turn off the digital audio-recorders after answering any initial interview questions or concerns and continue with targeted follow-up questions if time permits.
17. I will end the interview process and thank the participant for his or her time.
18. Turn on the audio recording device.
19. Introduce participant with a pseudonym (Participant 1; Participant 2; Participant 3) and coded identification (PO1; PO2; PO3).
20. The interview protocol ends.

### **Interview Questions**

The interview questions for this case study are

- A. What strategies do you use to retain donors?
- B. How do you determine the effectiveness of the strategies you implemented to retain donors?
- C. How do you determine the efficiency and effectiveness of your strategies to retain donors?
- D. What, if any, differences have you identified in your organization's strategies for securing sustainable funding from local businesses, private and public foundations, and individual donations?
- E. What processes, knowledge, and skills do you use to support strategies for retaining donors?
- F. What more do you want to say about the strategies you use to retain repetitive donors?

## Appendix B: Interview Protocol (Baldrige Questions)

**Interview Title:** Using the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. (2019) and its Criteria, Explore Data from BCD Senior Leaders.

**Purpose:** Over a period of 40 weeks, based on interviews and continual member checking, develop the Organizational Profile for BCD containing a detailed of the following categories (a) leadership, (b) strategy, (c) customers, (d) measurement, analysis, and knowledge management, (e) workforce, (f) operations, and (g) results.

**Protocol:**

1. The interview protocol begins. This protocol works for both telephonic and in-person interviews.
2. Pre-Condition: The study participants will have previously read the Consent Form for Senior Leader Interview and provided their consent via e-mail, agreeing to participate in this research.
3. If telephonic, I will either call into the agreed upon a phone number or have the participating senior leader call the agreed upon phone number.
4. I will arrive early enough to set up the room and to ensure the room is private enough for the interview.
5. Script before the interview:

*My name is Robert Enchil. I want to thank you once again for being willing to participate in the interview aspect of my study. As I mentioned to you before, my study seeks to explore strategies that you, as a senior leader of the BCD Organization, use to retain donors for their organizations. Before*

*participating today, you consented to have the interview audio-recorded. Do you still consent to audio-recording? I will transcribe the audio-recording and provide you the transcription for you to clarify and verify. Once you agree to the transcription, I will use that information as part of the case study. I intend to keep the interview to no more than 60 minutes.*

6. I will provide the participating senior leader with the information on how to withdraw from the study.
7. I will provide information regarding the member checking process that will occur after the interview. I will transcribe the audio-recording and then schedule a synchronous or an asynchronous follow-up meeting for the participating senior leader to review the transcript to ensure the reliability and validity of the data.
8. I will turn on the digital audio recorder, and I will note the date, time, and location of the interview. I will also include a second digital recorder as a backup. I will have writing utensils available to take notes.
9. I will introduce the participant to his or her alphanumeric code for the identification or with a pseudonym (e.g., SL1, SL2, SL3) on the audio recording.
10. Note the current date and time and then I will begin the interview.
11. I will begin with question #A and will follow through to the final question
12. I will end the interview sequence.

13. I will thank the participant senior leader for his or her time and participation in the study.
14. I will reiterate my contact information for follow-up questions and any concerns from the participating senior leader.
15. I will set an initial follow-up date for the member-checking.
16. I will turn off the digital audio-recorders after answering any initial interview questions or concerns and continue with targeted follow-up questions if time permits.
17. I will end the interview process and thank the participant for his or her time.
18. Turn on the audio recording device.
19. Introduce participant with a pseudonym (Participant 1; Participant 2; Participant 3) and coded identification (PO1; PO2; PO3).
20. The interview protocol ends.

## Appendix C: DBA Research Agreement

### WALDEN UNIVERSITY

#### DBA RESEARCH AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT (the "Agreement") is made and entered into on this 17<sup>th</sup> day of November by and between WALDEN UNIVERSITY, LLC, located at 100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 900, Minneapolis, MN 55401 ("Walden") and [REDACTED]

#### RECITALS

WHEREAS, Walden offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs and seeks to partner with institutions to allow Walden doctoral students (the "Students") to receive academic credit for work on research projects ("Research").

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises and covenants hereinafter set forth it is understood and agreed upon by the parties hereto, as follows:

#### I. TERM AND TERMINATION

This Agreement shall commence on the Effective Date and shall continue for a period of three (3) years (the "Initial Term"). Upon expiration of the Initial Term of this Agreement, this Agreement and the Term shall renew for successive one (1) year periods (each a "Renewal Term"). Notwithstanding the foregoing, either party may terminate this Agreement for any reason or no reason, upon ninety (90) calendar days' prior written notice to the other party. In the event of termination or expiration of this Agreement before a participating Student(s) has completed the Research, such Student(s) shall be permitted to complete the Research subject to the applicable terms of this Agreement, which shall survive for such Research until the date of completion.

#### II. RESEARCH

A. Institution and Walden may, from time-to-time, agree that selected Students, if accepted by Institution, may participate in Research with Institution. Walden shall be responsible for referring Students to the Institution and will instruct Students to provide Institution with a description of the Research. Walden agrees to refer to the Institution only those Students who have completed the required prerequisite course of study as determined by Walden. The parties anticipate that all Research will be done remotely and that Students will not be present at Institution's facilities.

B. Walden and Institution will conduct their activities hereunder in compliance with their respective policies and all applicable laws and regulations. In the event that any regulatory compliance issues arise, the parties will cooperate in good faith in any review conducted by the other party.

C. Where applicable, the Institution shall provide the Student with an orientation familiarizing student with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations that pertain to the Research with the Institution, which may include those pertaining to Standards for Privacy of

## WALDEN UNIVERSITY

Individually Identifiable Health Information (the "Privacy Rule") issued under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), which govern the use and/or disclosure of individually identifiable health information.

D. The Institution reserves the right to dismiss at any time any Student whose health condition, conduct or performance is a detriment to the Student's ability to successfully complete the Research at the Institution or jeopardizes the health, safety or well-being of any patients, clients or employees of the Institution. The Institution shall promptly notify Walden of any problem or difficulty arising with a Student and a discussion shall be held either by telephone or in person to determine the appropriate course of action. The Institution will, however, have final responsibility and authority to dismiss any Student from Institution.

E. The Institution and Walden shall each maintain general liability insurance (or comparable coverage under a program of self-insurance) for itself and its employees with a single limit of no less than One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence and Three Million Dollars (\$3,000,000) annual aggregate. Each party shall provide the other party with proof of coverage upon request.

### III. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

A. The Student shall agree to abide by the rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the Institution as provided to Student by the Institution during their orientation at the Institution and shall abide by the requirements of all applicable laws.

B. If applicable, the Student shall agree to comply with the Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information (the "Privacy Rule") issued under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), which govern the use and/or disclosure of individually identifiable health information.

C. The Student shall arrange for and provide to Institution any information requested by Institution including, but not limited to, criminal background checks, health information, verification of certification and/or licensure, insurance information and information relating to participation in federally funded insurance programs.

### IV. MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. FERPA. For purposes of this Agreement, pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA"), the parties acknowledge and agree that the Institution has an educational interest in the educational records of the Student participating in the Program and to the extent that access to Student's records are required by the Institution in order to carry out the Research. Institution and Walden shall only disclose such educational records in compliance with FERPA.

B. HIPAA. The parties agree that, if the Institution is a covered entity under HIPAA:



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## WALDEN UNIVERSITY

(1) Where a Student is participating in Research that will require access to Protected Health Information:

(a) Student shall be considered part of Institution's workforce for HIPAA compliance purposes in accordance with 45 CFR §160.103, but shall not otherwise be construed to be employees of Institution;

(b) Student shall receive training by the Institution on, and subject to compliance with, all of Institution's privacy policies adopted pursuant to HIPAA; and

(c) Student shall not disclose any Protected Health Information, as that term is defined by 45 CFR §164.105, to which a Student has access through program participation that has not first been de-identified as provided in 45 CFR §164.514(a);

(2) Walden will never access or request to access any Protected Health Information held or collected by or on behalf of the Institution that has not first been de-identified as provided in 45 CFR §164.514(a); and

(3) No services are being provided to the Institution by Walden pursuant to this Agreement and therefore this Agreement does not create a "business associate" relationship as that term is defined in 45 CFR §160.103.

C. Publications. Students and Walden are free to publish, present, or use any results arising out of the Research for their own academic, instructional, research, or publication purposes. Students shall submit a draft of any proposed publication to Institution at least ten (10) business days prior to submission for publication, presentation, or use. To the extent Institution requires that Students enter into nondisclosure or confidentiality agreements, such agreements shall be subject to this Section allowing publication of Research results.

D. Institution and Walden will promote a coordinated effort by evaluating the Research at mutually agreeable times, planning for its continuous improvement, making such changes as are deemed advisable and discussing problems as they arise concerning this affiliation.

E. The parties agree that Students are at all times acting as independent contractors and that Students are not and will not be considered employees of the Institution or any of its subsidiaries or affiliates by virtue of a Student's participation in the Research and shall not as a result of Student's participation in the Research, be entitled to compensation, remuneration or benefits of any kind.

F. Institution and Walden agree that Student will have equal access to their respective programs and facilities without regard for gender identity, race, color, sex, age, religion or creed, marital status, disability, national or ethnic origin, socioeconomic status, veteran status, sexual orientation or other legally protected status. Institution and Walden will comply with all applicable non-discrimination laws in providing services hereunder.

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## WALDEN UNIVERSITY

G. The terms and conditions of this Agreement may only be amended by written instrument executed by both parties.

H. This Agreement is nonexclusive. The Institution and Walden reserve the right to enter into similar agreements with other institutions.

I. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota.

J. Any notice required hereunder shall be sent by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested and shall be deemed given upon deposit thereof in the U.S. mail (postage prepaid). Notices to Walden shall be sent to Jenny Sherer, Office of Research Ethics and Compliance; 100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 900; Minneapolis MN 55401 with a copy to: Walden University, LLC; Attention: Assistant Divisional Counsel; 650 South Exeter Street; Baltimore, MD 21202.

K. Each party agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the other from all losses or liabilities resulting from the negligent acts or omissions of the indemnifying party and/or its employees or agents arising out of the performance or the terms and conditions of this Agreement, except to the extent such losses or liabilities are caused by the indemnified party's negligence or willful misconduct.

L. This Agreement sets forth the entire understanding of the parties hereto and supersedes any and all prior agreements, arrangements and understandings, oral or written, of any nature whatsoever, between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof. This Agreement and any amendments hereto may be executed in counterparts and all such counterparts taken together shall be deemed to constitute one and the same instrument. The parties agree that delivery of an executed counterpart signature hereof by facsimile transmission, or in "portable document format" (".pdf") form, or by any other electronic means intended to preserve the original graphic and pictorial appearance of a document, will have the same effect as physical delivery of the paper document bearing the original signature.

**SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWS**


# WALDEN UNIVERSITY

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have duly executed this Agreement, effective the date first above written:

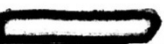
WALDEN UNIVERSITY, LLC

By: 

(signature)

Name: 

(Print name)


Title: 

Date: 1/20/2017

INSTITUTION

By: 

(signature)

Name: 

(Print name)

Title: 

Date: 12/16/16

## Appendix D: Consulting Capstone 40-Week Project Time Line

Term/ Week No.	Activity	Deliverable(s)	Key Performance Indicators/Measures
Term 1/ Wk 1	Contact client Identify and agree upon scope of project and deliverables Create, submit, and receive client's signature on Service Order (SO) Client provides orientation to org's culture, policies and protocols, and regulatory compliance requirements Complete Form A to receive the IRB approval number for this case study	Signed SO that aligns with DBA Research Agreement	List of client's needs, expectations, and requirements, including understanding of client's organizational culture, policies, and regulatory compliance requirements Affirmation of/agreement upon project scope, deliverables, and timeline Signed SO
Term 1/ Wk 2	Begin data- and information-gathering interviews and research (e.g., client's website, foundational documents)	Construct template for working draft of client's Organizational Profile (OP) and outline of key factors (KFs)	Template for documentation of evidence supporting students' identification of key factors that are of strategic importance to the organization
Term 1/ Wk 3	Continue gathering data/information through interviews with client's key leaders, managers, and stakeholders	Complete relevant sections of template	Draft of client's product offerings and services, business proposition, mission, vision, values (MVV), and core competencies, governance structure, relationship to parent organization
Term 1/ Wk 4	Gather data/information about client's workforce and customers	Complete relevant sections of template	Draft of client's workforce segments, including volunteers; table of relevant workforce demographics, requirements, and engagement factors
Term	Gather data/information about client's key	Complete relevant sections of	Draft of client's key suppliers, partners, and

1/ Wk 5	suppliers, partners, and collaborators	template	collaborators, including key mechanisms for communication and key supply-chain requirements
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Term 1/ Wk 6	Gather data/information about client's assets, regulatory requirements, and key competitive changes	Complete relevant sections of template	Draft of client's assets (facilities, technologies, equipment), regulatory requirements, including occupational health and safety regulations, accreditation, certification, industry standards, and/or product regulations
Term 1/ Wk 7	Gather data/information about client's strategic advantages and challenges, and performance improvement system	Complete relevant sections of template	Draft of client's key strategic challenges and advantages in areas of business, operations, societal responsibilities, and workforce; key elements of client's performance improvement system
Term 1/ Wk 8	Draft OP	Completed OP template	Working draft of OP

**Process Chapters: Leadership Triad Component of Client Case Study (Leadership, Strategy, Customers)**

Term/ Week No.	Activity	Deliverable(s)	Key Performance Indicators/Measures
Term 2/ Wk 1 (Wk 9 of 40-wk plan)	Leadership 1.1: Gather evidence to describe and evaluate: How do senior leaders lead the organization?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How do senior leaders set MVV?</li> <li>- How do leaders' actions demonstrate their commitment to legal and ethical behavior?</li> <li>- How do leaders communicate with and engage the entire workforce and key customers? - How do leaders create an environment for success now and in the future?</li> </ul>	Working draft of Leadership 1.1

		- How do leaders create a focus on action that will achieve the organization's mission?	
Term 2/ Wk 2 (Wk 10 of 40- wk plan)	Leadership 1.2: Gather evidence to describe and evaluate: How do leaders govern the organization and fulfill societal responsibilities?	- How does client organization ensure responsible governance? - How does client organization evaluate the performance of senior leaders and the governance board? - How does client organization address and anticipate legal, regulatory, and community concerns with its products and operations?	Working draft of Leadership 1.2
		- How does client organization promote and ensure ethical behavior in all interactions? - How does client organization consider societal well-being and benefit as part of its strategy and daily operations? - How does client organization actively support and strengthen its key communities?	
Term 2/ Wk 3 (Wk 11 of 40- wk plan)	Strategy 2.1: Gather evidence to describe and evaluate: How does client organization develop strategy?	- How does client organization conduct strategic planning? - How does strategy development process stimulate and incorporate innovation? - How does client organization collect/analyze relevant data and develop information to support strategic planning? - How does client organization decide which key processes will be accomplished by its workforce and which by external suppliers and partners? What are client organization's key work systems? - What are client organization's vital few strategic objectives and timetable for achieving them?	Working draft of Strategy 2.1

		- How do strategic objectives achieve appropriate balance among varying/competing organizational needs?	
Term 2/ Wk 4 (Wk 12 of 40- wk plan)	Strategy 2.2: Gather evidence to describe and evaluate: How does client organization implement strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are key short- and longer-term action plans?</li> <li>- How does client organization deploy action plans?</li> <li>- How does client organization ensure availability of financial and other resources (including HR) to achieve action plans while meeting current obligations?</li> <li>- What are key workforce plans to support short- and longer- term strategic objectives and action plans?</li> <li>- What key performance measures or indicators does client organization use to track achievement/effectiveness of action plans?</li> </ul>	Working draft of Strategy 2.2
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For these key performance measures/indicators, what are client organization's performance projections for short- and longer-term planning horizons?</li> <li>- How does client organization establish/implement modified action plans if circumstances require a shift in plans and rapid execution of new plans?</li> </ul>	
Term 2/ Wk 5 (Wk 13 of 40- wk plan)	Customers 3.1: How does client organization obtain information from customers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does client organization listen to, interact with, and observe customers to obtain actionable information?</li> <li>- How does client organization listen to potential customers to obtain actionable information?</li> <li>- How does client organization determine customer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement?</li> <li>- How does client organization obtain information on customers' satisfaction</li> </ul>	Working draft of Customers 3.1

		relative to other organizations?	
Term 2/ Wk 6 (Wk 14 of 40- wk plan)	Customers 3.2: How does client organization engage customers by serving their needs and building relationships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does client organization determine product offerings?</li> <li>- How does client organization enable customers to seek information and support?</li> <li>- How does client organization determine customer groups and market segments?</li> <li>- How does client organization build and manage customer relationships?</li> <li>- How does client organization manage customer complaints?</li> </ul>	Working draft of Customers 3.2
Term 2/ Wk 7 (Wk 15 of 40- wk plan)	Analyze/Evaluate information for Leadership Triad (Leadership, Strategy, Customers)	Organize, analyze, validate, and confirm data and information for Leadership, Strategy, Customers	Working draft of Leadership Triad chapters of Client Case Study, including evidence-based feedback on client's strengths and opportunities for improvement (OFIs) Milestone 1
Term 2/ Wk 8 (Wk 16 of 40- wk plan)	Align and integrate data/information in OP and Leadership Triad (Process categories 1, 2, and 3)	Compile draft document of OP and all process chapters in Leadership Triad (Process categories 1, 2, and 3)	Complete working draft of process chapters of Leadership Triad (Process categories 1, 2, and 3), including evidence-based feedback on client's strengths and OFIs

**Process Chapters: Initial Results Triad (Workforce, Operations) and Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management Components of Client Case Study**

Week No.	Activity	Deliverable(s)	Key Performance Indicators/Measures
Term 3/	Workforce 5.1: How does client	- How does client organization assess workforce	Working draft of



<p>Wk 1 (Wk 17 of 40- wk plan)</p>	<p>organization build an effective and supportive workforce environment?</p>	<p>capability and capacity needs?                      - How does client organization recruit, hire, place, and retain new workforce members?                      - How does client organization prepare its workforce for changing capability and capacity needs?                      - How does client organization manage its workforce?                      - How does client organization ensure workplace health, security, and accessibility for its workforce?                      - How does client organization support its workforce via services, benefits, and policies?</p>	<p>Workforce 5.1</p>
<p>Term 3/ Wk 2 (Wk 18 of 40- wk plan)</p>	<p>Workforce 5.2: How does client organization engage its workforce to achieve a high- performance work environment?</p>	<p>- How does client organization foster a culture characterized by open communication, high performance, and an engaged workforce?                      - How does client organization determine key drivers of workforce engagement?                      - How does client organization assess workforce engagement?                      - How does client organization’s workforce performance management system support high performance and workforce engagement?                      - How does client organization’s learning and development system support the organization’s needs and the personal development of its workforce members, managers, and leaders?                      - How does client organization evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of its learning and development system?                      - How does client organization manage career progression for its workforce and future leaders?</p>	<p>Working draft of Workforce 5.2</p>

Term 3/ Wk 3 (Wk 19 of 40- wk plan)	Operations 6.1: How does client organization design, manage, and improve its key products and work processes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does client organization determine key product and work process requirements?</li> <li>- What are the client organization's key work processes?</li> <li>- How does client organization design its products/processes to meet requirements?</li> <li>- How does client organization's day-to-day operation of work processes ensure that they meet process requirements?</li> <li>- How does client organization determine its key support processes?</li> <li>- How does client organization improve work processes to improve products and performance, enhance its core competencies, and reduce variability?</li> <li>- How does client organization manage its supply chain?</li> <li>- How does client organization pursue opportunities for innovation?</li> </ul>	Working draft of Operations 6.1
Term 3/ Wk 4 (Wk 20 of 40- wk plan)	Operations 6.2: How does client organization ensure effective management of operations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does client organization control overall costs of operations?</li> <li>- How does client organization ensure the reliability of its information systems?</li> <li>- How does client organization ensure the security and cybersecurity of sensitive or privileged data and information?</li> <li>- How does client organization provide a safe operating environment?</li> <li>- How does client organization ensure that it is</li> </ul>	Working draft of Operations 6.2

		prepared for disasters/emergencies?	
Term 3/ Wk 5 (Wk 21 of 40- wk plan)	Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management 4.1: How does client organization measure, analyze, and then improve organizational performance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does client organization track data and information on daily operations and overall performance?</li> <li>- How does client organization select comparative data and information to support fact- based decision making?</li> </ul>	Working draft of Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management 4.1

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does client organization select voice-of-the-customer and market data and information?</li> <li>- How does client organization ensure that its performance measurement system can respond to rapid/unexpected organizational or external changes?</li> <li>- How does client organization review its performance and capabilities?</li> <li>- How does client organization project its future performance? - How does client organization use findings from performance reviews to develop priorities for continuous improvement and opportunities for innovation?</li> </ul>	
Term 3/ Wk 6 (Wk 22 of 40- wk plan)	Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management 4.2: How does client organization manage its information and organizational knowledge assets?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does client organization verify and ensure the quality of organizational data and information?</li> <li>- How does client organization ensure the availability of organizational data and information?</li> <li>- How does client organization build and manage organizational knowledge?</li> </ul>	Working draft of Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management 4.2

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How does client organization share best practices in the organization?</li> <li>- How does client organization use its knowledge and resources to embed learning in the way it operates?</li> </ul>	
Term 3/ Wk 7 (Wk 23 of 40- wk plan)	Analyze/Evaluate information for Initial Results triad (Workforce, Operations) and Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management	Organize, analyze, validate, and confirm data and information for Workforce; Operations; and Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management	Working draft of Initial Results Triad chapters of Client Case Study, including evidence-based feedback on client's strengths and OFIs
Term 3/ Wk 8 (Wk 24 of 40- wk plan)	Align and integrate data/information in OP, Leadership Triad, and Initial Results Triad chapters	Compile draft document of OP and all process chapters in Leadership and Initial Results Triad	Complete working draft of process chapters of Client Case Study, including evidence-based feedback on client's strengths and OFIs Milestone 2

### Results Chapter: Collection, Analysis, and Preparation of Results

Term/ Week No.	Activity	Deliverable(s)	Key Performance Indicators/Measures
Term 4/ Wk 1 (Wk 25 of 40- wk plan)	Results 7.1: What are client organization's product performance and process effectiveness results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are client organization's results for products and customer service processes?</li> <li>- What are client organization's process effectiveness/efficiency results?</li> <li>- What are client organization's safety and emergency preparedness results?</li> <li>- What are client organization's supply-chain management</li> </ul>	Working draft of analysis of results reported in 7.1

		results?	
Term 4/ Wk 2 (Wk 26 of 40- wk plan)	Results 7.2: What are client organization's customer-focused results?	- What are client organization's customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction results? - What are client organization's customer engagement results?	Working draft of analysis of results reported in 7.2
Term 4/ Wk 3 (Wk 27 of 40- wk plan)	Results 7.3: What are client organization's workforce-focused results?	- What are client organization's workforce capability/capacity results? - What are client organization's workforce climate results? - What are client organization's workforce engagement results? - What are client organization's workforce and leader development results?	Working draft of analysis of results reported in 7.3
Term 4/ Wk 4 (Wk 28 of 40- wk plan)	Results 7.4: What are client organization's senior leadership and governance results?	- What are client organization's results for senior leaders' communication/engagement with workforce and customers? - What are client organization's results for governance accountability? - What are client organization's legal and regulatory results? - What are client organization's results for ethical behavior? - What are client organization's results for societal well-being and support of its key communities? - What are client organization's results for achievement of its organizational strategy and action plans?	Working draft of analysis of results reported in 7.4
Term 4/ Wk 5 (Wk 29 of 40- wk plan)	Results 7.5: What are client organization's results for financial viability?	- What are client organization's financial performance results? - What are client organization's marketplace performance results?	Working draft of analysis of results reported in 7.5
Term 4/	Compile and verify results	Verify analysis of results levels, trends, and	Assemble and format Results chapter

Wk 6 (Wk 30 of 40- wk plan)	for each Results section	comparisons	Milestone 3
Term 4/ Wk 7 (Wk 31 of 40- wk plan)	Assemble full draft of Client Case Study	Align and integrate data/information in all sections of Client Case Study	Full working draft of Client Case Study
Term 4/ Wk 8 (Wk 32 of 40- wk plan)			
<b>Preparation and Review of Client Case Study</b>			
Term/ Week No.	Activity	Deliverable(s)	Key Performance Indicators/Measures
Term 5/ Wk 1 (Wk 33 of 40- wk plan)	Review full draft of Client Case Study with mentor	Revise and refine full draft of Client Case Study	Full draft of Client Case Study to serve as checking copy for client leader's review
Term 5/ Wk 2 (Wk 34 of 40- wk plan)			
Term 5/ Wk 3	Schedule client meetings to present full draft of Client	Revise and refine full draft of Client Case Study to reflect client's input about errors in	Full draft of Client Case Study that has been reviewed by client (and key

(Wk 35 of 40-	Case Study	fact and suggested edits	stakeholders, if appropriate)
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wk plan)			
Term 5/ Wk 4 (Wk 36 of 40-wk plan)			
Term 5/ Wk 5 (Wk 37 of 40-wk plan)	Final review of penultimate draft of Client Case Study with mentor	Revise, refine, format, and prepare presentation copy of Client Case Study	Presentation copy of Client Case Study for delivery to client
Term 5/ Wk 6 (Wk 38 of 40-wk plan)			
Term 5/ Wk 6	Prepare “scrubbed” edition of Client Case Study that is suitable for public	Remove/replace all proper nouns and other identifiers, remove all proprietary and confidential information from Client Case Study	Client’s signed consent to publish redacted version of the case study

(Wk 39 of 40-wk plan)	presentation/publication	Students must submit this final, publishable version of the case study to clients for review and approval at least 10 days prior to submission to Walden University for publication, presentation, or use. Students must receive written approval from the client prior to submitting this version of the case study for publication. This is the ONLY version of the case study that may be submitted for publication.	Public copy of Client Case Study for presentation/publication
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