



*Navigating a change in leadership, particularly one involving the departure of a founder or long-term director, requires that we consider the human side of change including how individuals and organizations move through three stages of transition. This framework was adapted from the work of William Bridges.*

## Navigating Leadership Transitions

<b>Transition stage experienced by those in the organization...</b>	<b>Event experienced by those in the organization...</b>	<b>Feelings often experienced by those in the organization...</b>	<b>Actions leaders can take that often help...</b>
<b>SAYING GOODBYE</b>	Person gives notice or is asked to leave their position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denial</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Loss</li> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Sadness</li> <li>• Release/relief</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make space for the expression of feelings</li> <li>• Recognize/celebrate contributions of the departing leader</li> <li>• Acknowledge how the organization's legacy will continue</li> </ul>
<b>MESSY MIDDLE</b>	<p>Acting or interim director is in place</p> <p>Search process is underway</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty</li> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Frustration</li> <li>• Hard to focus</li> <li>• Desire for order</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live with ambiguity (possibilities)</li> <li>• Communicate what the process will be for moving forward</li> <li>• Stay flexible; plans may change</li> </ul>
<b>MOVING FORWARD</b>	New leader begins work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High hopes, optimism</li> <li>• Uncertainty</li> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Resentment</li> <li>• Excitement</li> <li>• Confidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orient the incoming leader (encourage a realistic workload)</li> <li>• Thank those who took on extra duties during the transition</li> <li>• Communicate about what has changed/ what has not changed</li> <li>• Communicate what everyone can do to help move forward</li> <li>• Celebrate!</li> </ul>