Navigating the Tensions of Nonprofit Board Governance Through Appreciative Inquiry at the Corona Norco United Way

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration

by

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Abstract

The social service sector's changing landscape has created new challenges for non-profit organizations (Lu, J., Shon, J. and Zhang, P., 2020, Ryan 2002). For-profit organizations have started to form foundations controlling their funds from source to benefactor. As a result, non-profits are receiving less funding to provide critical services to their communities. Non-profits must find additional revenue streams to survive. Their survival is essential as it provides critical services to communities that market-driven philanthropy does not fill. To compensate for this change in funding, the United Way Worldwide (UWW) has instructed its local branches to transition from traditional payroll deduction campaigns. Instead, they must find alternate revenue streams, such as program-based operations that receive funding from local government grants and private foundations. This study examines one local chapter, the Corona Norco United Way (CNUW), and the tensions inherent in board governance during this transition. Based on Chambers and Cornforth (2010) research examining board governance roles and the tensions and models first introduced by Cornforth (2002), I examine agency and stewardship theories related to the agency problem that dominates governance theory.

Using action research, I build upon the models and theories presented by Cornforth and Chambers to produce a model for navigating the tensions inherent in board governance. I facilitate a four-phase, strengths-based, and holistic Appreciative Inquiry process within the CNUW to create a path for navigating these tensions and a strategic plan to formalize the change. Participants engaged in phases that included semi-structured interviews and collective sensemaking based on the data collected from interviews and archival documents. I captured the process in a visual map with temporal bracketing to track the progress of the project. I then used thematic coding of archival documents and personal journaling to analyse the data abductively. The process was then further distilled, chronologically, using a narrative strategy and Friedrich, Vessey, Schuelke, Ruark, and Mumford's (2009) Model for Mediators of the Theory-Practice Gap in a Successful Organization Project.

There were three significant findings from the project. First, applying an Appreciative Inquiry whole system approach as an action research mode created the intention and structure that allowed the participants to engage in stewardship behaviours rather than defaulting to agency behaviours in crisis. Second, by engaging in stewardship behaviours related to collective leadership, performance roles, and a focus on external processes, the participants were able to navigate the tensions inherent in board governance collectively. Finally, by intentionally engaging in structured, collective phases of a strengths-based approach, we could balance the tensions inherent in board governance. The outcomes were a one to three-year strategic plan, increases in cash liquidity of three hundred per cent, and grant funding of four hundred per cent.

Keywords: Stewardship Theory, Agency Theory, Agency Problem, Board Governance, Non-Profit Governance, Tensions, Theory-Practice Gap, Action research, Appreciative Inquiry, Social Services

DECLARATION OF OWN WORK

I declare that this thesis

Navigating the Tensions of Nonprofit Board Governance Through Appreciative Inquiry at the Corona Norco United Way

Is entirely my own work, and that where any material could be construed as the work of others, it is fully cited and referenced and with appropriate acknowledgement given.

Signature 

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Changing Environment of Social Services

Communities meet their needs through public and private organizations that make up society's infrastructure, from shopping malls and grocery stores to free clinics. The social services sector also fills communities' needs in areas where market-driven forces have not incentivized private corporations, such as domestic violence or homelessness (Powell and Bromley, 2020). However, a recent social services trend has reduced funding from traditional sources (Ryan, 2002). As a result, for-profit foundations are replacing nonprofit organizations in some areas (Lu, J., Shon, J. and Zhang, P., 2020). The replacement of non-profits by for-profits in social services begs the question; If the for-profits are replacing non-profits, why is there a need for non-profits to continue serving the community? The answer is two-fold: first, for-profits do not necessarily take on the same services that existing non-profits do, and second, the experience, skills, and personnel that non-profit organizations have accumulated over many decades of serving the communities are unique. Kong and Farrell (2010) refer to these assets as relational capital (RC). RC is “the knowledge and learning capabilities that exist in relationships between an organization and its external stakeholders” (Kong and Farrell, 2010, p.99). These organizations' critical services combined with their unique assets of experience and capability are necessary for our communities' well-being; therefore, their survival is critical. To survive in this new environment, non-profit organizations need to change their funding sources and how they operate. The local branch of the United Way that serves the Corona, Norco, and East Vale communities is an organization that is experiencing this change in the social services landscape. How the leadership will navigate that change is the focus of my workplace project.

1.2 The Corona Norco United Way

The UW was founded in 1887 and currently engages nearly 2.6 million volunteers, over 9.5 million donors. It has over 1800 local affiliates in 40 countries. Globally they raise over $4 billion for charities annually (United Way, 2018). Their mission is to “improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities around the world to advance the common good.” (United Way, "Our Mission" [web site], 2018). The reduced funding across the

social services sector has significantly impacted the UW as well. The United Way Worldwide (UWW) has lost over $8 million in revenue or approximately 10% of its total operating budget in the last two years. Its local branches have experienced a significant drop in revenue, decreasing the number of programs funded, negatively impacting community members in need. Primarily the source of funding has been the payroll deduction campaigns hosted by the United Way within for-profit organizations. For-profit organizations are starting in-house foundations and keeping control of their internal campaigns' contributions, causing reduced funding, impacting the UW (Ryan, 2002; Roshayani, A., Hisham, M. M., Ezan, R. N., Ruhaini, M., Ramesh, N., 2018). The Corona Norco United Way (CNUW) is a local branch located in Southern California, fifty miles southeast of Los Angeles and is the subject of my action research project. I will be examining the CNUW as we make the changes necessary to adapt to this new landscape. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the current state of the CNUW.

The relational capital that the United Way possesses makes it uniquely suited to cater to global communities' needs and customize local branches to the needs of individual communities. Newcomer for-profit foundations who are funding programs directly will be disadvantaged in attending to the community's critical needs. They lack the relational capital (Kong and Farrell, 2010) of nonprofit organizations such as the United Way. The United Way has established its brand as a sign to donors worldwide that the sponsored program has gone through a rigorous allocation and vetting process, validating that the funds are indeed making it to the community members. This idea represents the core of why the United Way came into existence and why its continued presence is necessary. For the United Way to continue to fill gaps in the services that for-profits provide in this new landscape, it must survive.

To survive the decline in funding across the social services sector, the United Way Worldwide has instructed all its affiliates to transform to program-based direct services to generate alternative revenue sources and adapt to the introduction of for-profit foundations. Within the local branch of the Corona Norco United Way, the overall operating budget has decreased. Simultaneously, expenses continue to rise, precipitating the defunding of multiple organizations dedicated to serving the community's needs.

Survival in this new landscape requires a change to a format that supports program-based operations and revenue streams. Local branches of the United Way and the boards that govern them must lead the change. However, to better understand what changes are needed, leaders must educate themselves on the inner workings of the United Way system. Next, I will discuss my journey to gain that knowledge.

I began as a Store Manager for Target, running an internal pledge campaign for the United Way of the Desert. The representative for the United Way (UW) used to ask me for time to get in front of the team members and ask for pledges by explaining the work they did and how they supported communities. They also asked me to support the message. I told him that I would not support something that I didn't fully understand or trust, so the representative spent a great deal of time educating me on how the UW helped our community. As I learned more, I came to realize that the United Way had supported many of the families that worked at my store. Some had grown up at facilities that the UW, such as the Boys and Girls club, supported, and now their kids were as well.

At the same time, I finished my MBA and was very curious about their finances. In essence, I wanted to make sure that the hard-earned money that my employees donated made it to the places that would do the most good. The representative encouraged me to volunteer as an allocation committee member, and I was so intrigued I committed to the process. Over the next several years, I spent time volunteering at multiple United Ways, particularly focused on helping communities with homelessness and domestic violence. I ended up working in the Corona area and reached out to the local CNUW, where the Executive director invited me to become a board member. Ever since that day, I have worked to help solve homelessness and domestic violence in the Corona, Norco, and East Vale communities. My role was to utilize my experience in business management, education, and leadership to help us plan and execute the transformation. The Board asked me to use a combination of education and experience to complete the transition placing me squarely in the role of the scholar-practitioner. I proposed that I could utilize my work towards a Doctorate in Business Administration to accomplish this as the programme is based in action research and is specifically designed to do what they were requesting. Therefore, the stakes became high as the weight of the CNUW's survival and

the completion of my programme melded. In 2015 As the pro bono vice president of the board of directors, I began to lead the Corona Norco United Way transformation to a program-based direct services provider.

The project continues today as we work to solidify the path forward. Because I became the president (chair) of the board of directors during this process, I will have to contend with issues of role duality and competing interests at times. I anticipate power issues with positional authority and researcher sometimes blurring the lines between researcher and practitioner. My goal is to capture our process and influence the way we navigate board governance through the literature. I also intend to draw our lessons into a generalizable format that could potentially be applied to other United Ways or nonprofits seeking to navigate board governance in the changing landscape we face.

We currently have the *Family Support Services* for domestic violence, a *General Education Diploma (GED)* program focused on Spanish-speaking residents, and *Pathways to Success* for income stability and counselling, financial training, and volunteerism coordination to connect community members to local projects. In 2018, approximately 70% of our funding came from payroll deductions and 30% from program grants, a change from 100% funding and 0% from payroll deductions in 2014. While donors remain invested because of our relationships, the situation is not sustainable. We need to demonstrate community impact through our programs' growth to obtain funding through grants, generate revenue through programs, and entice private donors to give more. Since the transformation, we struggled with proactive and strategic planning involving the board of directors, executive director, and the staff. The leadership team often reacts to pressure rather than proactively planning to avoid or resolve obstacles related to running the programs. The reactionary stance is partially due to a lack of a cohesive strategic plan that addresses the change we are making. We also seem to lose traction in the plans we have made. We have begun asking questions such as, ‘Do we have a clear picture of our goals?’, or ‘Whose job is it to keep us on track and guide the CNUW forward?’. It has become increasingly clear that we do not picture who does what and where we are going. Generally, we understand the mission of the local CNUW branch:

> “The Corona-Norco United Way engages the community to support and teach individuals toward educational success, and financial stability, healthful living and independence.” - Corona Norco United Way [Web Site] (Way 2021)

However, it is unclear how leadership plans to realize that mission—asking the board members to relate what the mission means results in an extended conversation with no clear answer. Even less clear is the vision for the future of our branch. When asked what the vision of the CNUW is, board members each have a different vision. Since establishing and communicating goals is a critical factor in organizational transformations' failure (Cornforth, 2012; Mordaunt and Cornforth, 2004), we must produce a clear plan for the change we are making and understand what it will require of our members.

Therefore, it will be crucial to define, understand, and communicate the goals of the CNUW to sustain our organization and formalize them in an updated strategic plan. The board of directors is responsible for laying out the organization’s vision and tasking the executive director and staff with implementing that vision. There are many practical and theoretical considerations for how boards govern organizations. Understanding the underpinnings and frameworks of board governance will be crucial in orchestrating the change.

1.3 Board Governance Theoretical Grounding

The extant literature for board governance contains multiple theories, yet three theories emerge as dominant. Agency, stewardship, and stakeholder theories have a significant amount of research connected to corporate governance and its subset board governance (Van Puyvelde, S., Caers, R., Dubois, C., Jegers, M., 2012; Coule, 2015; Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Hernandez, 2012; Schillemans, 2013; Davis, J.H., Schoorman, F.D. and Donaldson, L., 1997; Dalton, D.R., Hitt, M.A., Certo, S.T., Dalton, C.M., 2007; Huse, 2005; Cornforth, 2002; Höglund, L., Mårtensson, M. and Safari, A., 2018; Bruni-Bossio, V., Story, D.C. and Garcea, J., 2016; Galle and Walker, 2014). Agency and stewardship theories focus on how the managers and principals view each other in resolving the agency problem (Davis et al., 1997; Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Dalton et al., 2007). The agency problem's primary question is whether the manager’s interests while running an organization will diverge from the principal's interests adversely

or in ways that will ultimately benefit and lead the organization to innovation and performance. How an organization governs itself is crucial to the answer to that question. Stakeholder theory focuses on how value is created/traded, ethics and capitalism, and addresses the problems that combining the two create (Parmar, B.L., Freeman, R.E., Harrison, J.S., Wicks, A.C., Purnell, L. and De Colle, S., 2010).

Stakeholder theory is more concerned with understanding the environment and actors related to the organization and how members behave based on that understanding. While crucial to understanding any organization, my priority for this project is to focus on interacting with our environment and organizing ourselves internally. Since stakeholder theory is more focused on concepts that I anticipate will come later in the organization's development, I focus primarily on agency and stewardship theories. By understanding agency and stewardship theories, I can better understand how organizations navigate the agency problem through our chosen form of governance, board governance. Understanding these theories will give me a more complete picture of what challenges we will face in clarifying our strategies and implementing them.

Within the Corona Norco United Way, the relationships between directors and the Executive Director, for example, are understood through long-standing relationships and experiences together. These role relationships are critical to doing the work and enacting the mission (Sluss, D.M., Van Dick, R. and Thompson, B.S., 2011). Bruni-Bossio et al. (2016) argue that good board governance is positively related to good role-performance relationships, distinct from measuring relationships through warmth and comfort. Non-profits today must have role clarity to enact the mission and vision of the organization effectively. In addition to roles, the behaviours of leaders are critical to how organizations perform. In Transforming Nonprofit Boards to Function in the Twenty-First Century (Fram, 2016), the author indicates a hold-over 20th-century paradigm for board governance that has led to behaviours not conducive to the competitive environment identified by Ryan (2002) and Cornforth (2002; 2012). Therefore, non-profits today must also have clear definitions of leadership behaviours to enact the mission and vision of the organization effectively.

Zhu, H., Wang, P. and Bart, C. (2016) take an empirical approach to compare different processes and examine how they affect the board and decision-making. The study compares for-profit and non-profit board governance, examining how they differ and where they are similar. The findings suggest that specific processes, such as board meetings and outside-board-meeting interactions, affect strategic involvement differently and are distinct depending on the type of organization. Still, there is little to clarify what those roles are and how they affect organizations. There is a great deal of work to do in defining the roles of the members and officers and the processes we use to relate to the new program based CNUW. The disentangling of relationships and role-performance relationships will help determine leadership, roles, and processes at the CNUW. It will be critical to examine the current processes and how they lead to strategic decision-making to plan and communicate the change. Therefore, understanding these theories will be crucial to designing board governance at the Corona Norco United Way.

I anticipate some resistance to the planned change as it is outside our members' experience. Specifically, I have experienced conflicts when we have differing viewpoints on past decisions. Many conflicts relate to our private and public sector backgrounds as few of our organization members have operated in both. Ryan (2002) and Cornforth (2002) argue that conflicting processes and roles that come from the changing landscape of social services emerge as the clash of non-profit and for-profit perspectives (Cornforth, 2002; Ryan, 2002). Resistance may come in multiple forms on this project. I anticipate that the resistance may be rooted in how the board members identify themselves, affecting their ‘readiness and willingness to change’ (Coghlan, 2019). Symptoms of our readiness to change may manifest in competing logics of our identities as individuals and as a group. Piderit (2000) separates resistance into ‘cognitive, emotional, and behavioural attitudes, which may not indicate disagreement. Instead, they may control the rate or breadth of the change both internally and externally. Supporting these ideas are case studies such as Ezzamel, M., Willmott, H. and Worthington, F. (2001), where resistance was a functional tool for maintaining the self. Another useful contribution from Ford and Ford (2010) argues for the utility of resistance, which may be a potent tool in understanding how to harness existing board members' capabilities. Therefore, it will be

crucial to understand the differences and similarities in non-profit and for-profit organizations and their conflicts in transition.

1.4 The Cyclical Nature of the CNUW and action research

Operations and governance at the CNUW are temporally cyclical. We have regular board meetings for ninety minutes monthly, within a fiscal year, that begins in July and ends in June. Our regular monthly board meetings are the core venues where we discuss issues, update our plans, and make decisions requiring formalized proposals, motions, and votes to ratify. Between these monthly meetings, there are many informal meetings, lunches, phone calls, and emails that make up most of our interactions. Since the nature of our operations and processes are cyclical, I will need a research methodology that is conducive to conducting and analyzing research through cycles.

Action research “centres on ‘doing with’ rather than ‘doing for’ stakeholders” (Greenwood and Levin, 2006, p.1). At the heart of ‘doing with’ is a participative approach where collaboration ensures we hear the participants' voices. In addition to the Corona Norco United Way's cyclical nature, the operations are dynamic, requiring constant reflection, planning, diagnosing, executing, and evaluation. Action research may also contain these cycles when considering a planned approach to the work (Coghlan, 2019). Additionally, because all of the board members and a good portion of the staff are volunteers, the issues are being examined and solved by those whom the solution directly affects. Therefore, to address my workplace problem, it makes sense to take an action research approach (Anderson, L., Gold, J., Stewart, J., Thorpe, R., 2015).

Consistent with action research, I will present this project to bring the participants' practical voices to life while demonstrating the relevant theoretical context that leads to the research's activities and outcomes (Etherington, 2004; Anderson et al., 2015). Bringing the participant’s voices forward will require reflexivity as a scholar-practitioner to avoid constructing their stories for them. I find that the retelling of another’s narrative is one of the many places where practice can give way to theory. Translating the voices of participants to fit into existing theoretical constructs during the narration of a project may change its meaning and context irreversibly. The creation of the theory-practice gap, in this sense, is constructed by the researcher and is a trap I aspire to navigate. The false

dichotomy of theory and practice as mutually exclusive is more than an inconvenience; it is selective truth, which leaves out the subtlest nuances and elegance of enactment (Levick and Kuhn, 2007). Picturing theory and practice as adverse is a static view and is tantamount to settling for the simplification of snapshots in time and potentially falling into the trap of an account in a “present-at-hand” rather than “ready-at-hand” state (Weick 2002, pp.2–6). To understand the project and capture its elegance in fluid enactment, I will pursue a ”real-time reflexive” state (Weick 2002, p.5). To accomplish this, I intend to use Etherington's (2004) book as a guide for bringing forward the voices of participants in a fluid and cohesive writing style in addition to process strategies such as narrative, visual mapping, and temporal bracketing (Berends and Deken, 2019; Langley, 1999).

The changing landscape of the social services sector requires change for nonprofit organizations to survive. The CNUW is in the process of that change and is a dynamic, cyclical, and participatory environment that has unique skills and experiences that will benefit the communities we serve. However, we do not have a clear path forward, and our problems remain hard to define and navigate. Therefore, it makes sense that we engage in an action research project to clarify roles, define leadership, and map processes to create a clear path forward.

1.5 The Problems We Face and Research Objectives

To engage in action research for addressing my workplace problem, I must clarify the issues we face. There are three main problem areas within the CNUW. First, the board's action tends to be reactionary. Circular conversations about the same problems dominate our scheduled time together. We identify problems, but solutions are in short supply, and issues remain unresolved despite an increasing need. Additionally, problems feel like checklists of things rather than part of a cohesive plan to achieve our mission. We all have very different ideas about how to run the organization. We struggle to answer whether we should be running the day-to-day operations as a managing board overseeing the ED or as more participatory, working with the ED to guide action through co-creating a vision. Are we going to run the organization centrally or guide it collectively? The tension created by inconsistent leadership styles is the first problem we face.

Second, we continuously follow the clear and structured path of the UWW at the expense of growth and innovation. Setting new goals related to our mission and vision seem to be out of reach. We are aware that establishing and communicating goals is a critical factor in organizational transformations' failure (Cornforth, 2002; Mordaunt and Cornforth, 2004), but lining up with the UWW guidance feels overly restrictive. We do not have a structure of our own, but we do not want to follow the structure provided. Although we have a strategic plan (see Appendix K), progress is hard to define or track, and we seem to settle for structure and formality, choosing to comply with tradition and try to get back to 'normal'. We talk about growth, but it always seems like something to talk about in the future. The tension between conforming to tradition and changing to achieve higher levels of performance is the second problem we face.

Third, we are very focused on what is going on inside the CNUW to the exclusion of what is happening around us. The internal focus is mainly a function of not having a cohesive plan to allocate resources to balance our focus externally and internally. We depend on the ED to focus externally and keep us connected, but that has not been happening. We have many processes for internal regulation, but they are disconnected and siloed, and we have few or no processes for staying connected externally outside of the ED's control. The tension between internal and external focus is the third major problem we face.

The organization's sustainability is in question, and we do not have a clear path to understanding or achieving our goals. If the CNUW is to have a sustainable future, we need a new way of thinking about our governance and navigating the tensions inherent in our three main problems. Therefore, my project's purpose is to guide the organization in navigating the tensions inherent in the governance of the CNUW. I will define the objective and sub-objectives for my research project as follows:

Research Objective:

> To establish a path for the CNUW to navigate leadership, performance, and processes in a changing landscape.

Research sub-objectives:

- Clearly define and map the current state of the CNUW.
- Identify leadership roles, processes, and performance strategies.
- Create and formalize a 3–5-year strategic plan.

Completing these objectives will result in a framework for understanding board governance in our new environment and formalizing our understanding in a strategic plan. Redefined board governance and a viable strategic plan will enable the board of directors to support CNUW's program-based operations' growth and sustainability.

In the following chapters and sections, I describe in detail the path we took to achieve these objectives and what I learned as a scholar-practitioner. Chapter 2 examines the extant literature and the applicable theories related to board governance in non-profit organizations and how they relate to my workplace problem. First, I critically examine agency and stewardship theories related to the agency problem and discuss the differences and similarities between non-profit and for-profit organizations. I also introduce the 'black box' of governing organizations and introduce methods to understand better how and why it occurs. Then, I introduce the tensions inherent in board governance and why they present such difficulty in navigating. Next, I critically review the existing frameworks, such as Higgins' 8S model and Friedrich's Collective Leadership framework, to understand my workplace problem and gaps in existing frameworks. Lastly, I develop a visual framework for understanding my workplace problem to bridge those gaps.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and the Action Research (AR) process itself, explaining and justifying my choices in methodology and modes. First, I discuss how AR's cyclical process fits well with the dynamic operations of the CNUW. I then examine how the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) mode of AR gives structure to that dynamic process. I also examine how the AI process leaves gaps in bridging the practice-theory gap. Finally, I employ methods such as Tenkasi and Hay's Mediators of the Theory-Practice Gap framework and thematic coding analysis of raw data gathered during the phases to explain how I structure my analysis during the AI phases.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are detailed accounts of the process phases of Appreciative Inquiry. I also incorporate the applicable tensions and theories into narrating the process and conclude each phase with an analysis. One significant change was the timeframe of the strategic plan we ultimately formed; I discuss this change in detail on pg. 147 in Chapter 6. Finally, Chapter 7 is a personal reflection on the process and my personal growth as a scholar-practitioner. In the following section, Literature Review, I cover the theories, models, and frameworks I used to understand the extant literature and the project's theories.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Since I defined the research's objective as creating a new path for the organization members to navigate the new landscape, I begin by examining the theories used in the extant literature related to that landscape. Corporations with a 501c (3) tax-exempt status dominate the landscape of the US's social services sector, like the CNUW. Therefore, I will examine corporate governance to understand my workplace problem better. For my research purposes, I will use the definition of corporate governance as the "formal structures, informal structures, and processes that exist in oversight roles and responsibilities in the corporate context" (Solomon and Huse, 2019, p.321). Since corporations are at the heart of organizational structure and behaviour in the social services sector, it is crucial to understand corporate governance.

To better understand corporate governance, I will examine the central theories and concepts through which I view my workplace problem through the lens of corporate governance. First, I will describe my literature search strategy and referencing tactics to narrow the corporate governance topic. Next, I will examine the agency and stewardship theories and the agency problem's dominant paradigm within corporate governance research. A review of the extant literature reveals multiple factors: confirmation of a changing landscape for non-profit organizations, a lack of transparency in governance to outside researchers, themes of governance, and tensions inherent within those themes. Using extant literature as a guide, I will explore these tensions and build a framework to understand and apply the literature to my workplace problem. Finally, since a lack of transparency is at the heart of the theory-practice gap in corporate governance, I finish the chapter by explaining how I will unlock the 'black box' of governance through Action research. Having established the workplace problem, the context, and the landscape in which the workplace problem lies, I will begin by outlining the search strategy I will take to inform my research project.

2.2 Search Strategy

To gain a broad understanding of the literature and connect the conceptual work at the heart of my workplace problem, I searched using keywords such as corporate governance, board governance, multi-theoretical governance, and non-profit board governance. I used databases provided through access by the University of Liverpool's online library. EBSCOHost was the primary search database and yielded many relevant papers on the topic. I also used Google Scholar to find many sources and gain access through the Shibboleth portal provided by the University of Liverpool. Since corporate governance is a broad and pluralistic topic (John and Senbet, 1998; Williamson, 2008; Williamson, 2011), I narrowed the search to board governance within this broader topic. I further distilled board governance into for-profit and non-profit corporations in the extant literature. Non-profit board governance is a topic several steps removed from the original topic of corporate governance, and as such, has fewer publications from the most established journals. Therefore, I began my search in the top-ranked journals with the broadest corporate and board governance concepts and narrowed the searches through backwards and forward referencing.

The majority of literature that exists lies within the dominant paradigm of agency theory and research that questions this paradigm exists in journals that operate on the field's edges (Galle and Walker, 2014; Dalton, D.R., Hitt, M.A., Certo, S.T., Dalton, C.M., 2007; Jensen and Meckling, 1976; Caldwell, 2005; Van Puyvelde, S., Caers, R., Dubois, C., Jegers, M., 2012; Hendry, 2005). Therefore, I referred to the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS) Academic Journal Guide online to rank the journal sources that I found. I limited most of my sources to fourth and third-ranked journals with a preference for the fourth-ranked articles marked with an asterisk as journals of distinction early in the search. As the topics narrowed, I employed snowballing search techniques to identify the parts of my research that were unique as opposed to well-researched. For example, governance has a significant amount of research; however, the tensions that boards face within governance of non-profits has much less available research. In addition, much of the research is static and focused on generating theory or frameworks. I was looking for research that would guide a practical application of that theory. Practically applied case studies could provide me with signposts that facilitate

understanding. Therefore, I needed to widen my search and look to journals that brought newer ideas to the field. Those journals tended to be lower ranked in CABS primarily because they had less grounding in the existing literature. These ideas, such as tensions in governance (Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Cornforth, 2002), did not have the same preponderance of established ideas. Therefore, I used my research techniques to connect the newer ideas to established ideas. In the following sections, I draw a theoretical path from corporate governance to my workplace problem.

2.3 The Changing Landscape

Several articles were at the core of my research within the context of governance. Since I identified the workplace problem as centred in the social services industry and the changing landscape non-profit organizations face, I began there. While seeking to understand the issues we faced, I looked for organizations experiencing similar problems in reduced funding combined with a change in their funding nature. Ryan (2002) attributes the change not as an organizational issue but one that affected the social services industry and brought to light how the environment in which they operate is forcing a change in *how* they operate. Ryan explains root causes include tax benefits to for-profit organizations and greater levels of control over donations. Multiple researchers have confirmed the social services sector changes and have come to similar conclusions; for-profits are entering the social services sector and bringing competition with them (Fram, 2016; Rose-Ackerman, 1990; Mataira, P.J., Morelli, P.T., Matsuoka, J.K., Uehara-McDonald, S., 2014; Lu, J., Shon, J. and Zhang, P., 2020; Cornforth, 2010).

One of the most intriguing questions Ryan raises is how the competition brought by the entrance of for-profits into the social services sector will change the qualities that distinguish non-profits already providing services to the communities they serve. He queried about the changes that such competition will bring about in existing non-profits, specifically the potential of compromising their qualities to survive. With for-profit organizations producing services for the community, however, is the survival of existing non-profits necessary? The answer may lie in clarifying what non-profits are. The relationships, networks, tacit knowledge, and experience of meeting the community's needs most efficiently can be summed up as Relational Capital. Kong and Farrell define

‘Relational Capital’ (RC) as “the knowledge and learning capabilities that exist in relationships between an organization and its external stakeholders” (Kong and Farrell, 2010). The RC that organizations accrue and retain over years of community service is a unique asset that non-profit organizations hold. The disappearance of non-profits represents the loss of unique assets that for-profit organizations take time and resources to build independently, hindering their ability to provide services to the communities they serve.

Considering my workplace project, I found that Ryan’s ideas were like the challenges UWW and the CNUW faced. The changing landscape means change for the organization, and sustainable change occurs most efficiently through effective governance (Chambers and Cornforth, 2010). What is clear is that the changes are complex and can create tensions within the organization related to the agency problem (Ryan, 2002; Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Solomon and Huse, 2019; Cornforth, 2002; Andriopoulos and Lewis, 2009; Gergen and Gergen, 2000; Ferrer, P.S.S., Galvão, G.D.A. and Carvalho, M.M., 2020). Cornforth (2002) explicitly outlines the tensions inherent in navigating the agency problem, such as choosing between conformance and performance roles, centralized and collective leadership, and internal or external focus. However, the research does not have a firm grounding in the more recent corporate governance and board governance applications. The research also lacked empirical evidence or case studies to illustrate how these theories would apply. Rather the research focuses on ideas from core concepts from agency, stewardship, and stakeholder theories. Therefore, to ensure rigour and relevance, it makes sense to ground Ryan and Cornforth’s theories, concepts, and models to existing research and literature.

A criticism of Cornforth’s work and qualitative research in corporate governance, in general, is the ‘black box’ that obscures governance inner workings (Neill and Dulewicz, 2010; Rost and Osterloh, 2010). The research in governance has primarily been a measurement of inputs and outputs with little insight into what happens in the middle. Researchers have advocated for a multi-theoretical approach to governance to close the gap and provide visibility to those inner workings (Young and Thyil, 2008; Rubino, F.E., Tenuta, P. and Cambrea, D.R., 2017; Christopher, 2010). More recent research has shed

light on tensions and paradoxes within governance using this approach by interviewing executives where conflicts between collaboration and control may prevent directors from doing their required monitoring functions (Solomon and Huse, 2019). Additionally, the 'black box' that occludes insight into the inner workings remains present in more recent research. Recommendations include exploration of dynamic process-based constructivist approaches, as opposed to static objectivist approaches, to yield better progress Watson, C., Husband, G. and Ireland, A., 2020; Watson and Ireland, 2020)

A multi-theoretical approach through the lens of theories such as agency, stewardship, and stakeholder theories could pierce the veil of the 'black box' by providing the building blocks to create a framework to understand and facilitate navigating the tensions and themes that board members face. Piercing that veil could also close a gap between the theory and practice of governance. Starting with a multi-theoretical approach to earlier research themes and frameworks will enable me to refine researchers' ideas and construct a map of how board governance happens to assist board members in navigating the agency problem. Therefore, it makes sense that I employ a multi-theoretical approach to shed new light on the subject, pierce the veil of the 'black box', and close the theory-practice gap.

2.4 The Agency Problem

Central to the concept of governance is the divergence of principal and manager interests in corporations (Jensen and Meckling, 1976; Davis, J.H., Schoorman, F.D. and Donaldson, L., 1997; Gevurtz, F. A., 2004; Aguilera, R. V. et al., 2011). Understanding how this divergence affects governance requires a historical perspective to ground the research in the challenges organizations face inherently. From the earliest examples of business in North America, owners employed managers to govern their businesses (Jovanovi'c and Gruji'c, 2016). Up to the Industrial Revolution, ownership and control resided in the same hands, as owners kept close to the management of their business affairs (Jovanovi'c and Gruji'c, 2016; Berle and Means, 1932). However, the separation of control and ownership can lead to diverging interests between those who manage a property and those who own it, known as the agency problem (Smith,1937; Cornforth and

Macmillan, 2016; Dalton et al., 2007). Researchers invested their efforts in solving this problem, and agency theory was born. As a result, among the multiple theories of corporate governance, agency theory stands out as the dominant paradigm and the basis of most research (Hillman, Withers and Collins, 2009). Succinctly, Dalton et al. (2007, p. 1) state, “A central tenet of agency theory is that there is potential for mischief when the interests of owners and managers diverge”. To fully understand the agency problem and its implications for corporate governance, it is necessary to understand its history.

In *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,* Smith (1937) introduced many ideas that have influenced how we understand property, equity, ownership, and agency today, pointing to a divergence of owner and agent interests. Smith argued that if the actions that cause the industry’s progress and self-gain are aligned, then an agent would pursue progress in both. When those interests diverge, however, the unintentional benefit may no longer exist. Therefore, the tension between the agent and the principal exists, a condition known in modern vernacular as the agency problem. Smith believed this was an inevitable condition (Jensen and Meckling, 1976).

The agency problem existed conceptually and theoretically before the Industrial Revolution. In colonial New England, the owners operated merchant-based trading companies, and the separation between ownership and control had yet to occur. However, the issues they faced required them to deal with the stakeholders in addition to managing their businesses. Therefore, instead of a board to manage their businesses, they needed a board to settle disputes (judicial duties) and enact regulations (legislative duties) (Gevurtz, 2004).

The tensions inherent to navigating ownership and control were further complicated as corporations achieved a new status in the late 19th Century. The Supreme Court of the United States ruled, in *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad Company*, 118 U.S. 394 (1886), that corporations had the status of natural persons creating a new territory for a legal organization to have the rights of ownership of property (Dalton et al., 2007). Separation of ownership and control began before the 1920s but lacked definition or status as a full-blown problem until the 1930s (Wells, 2009). William Z. Ripley’s *Main Street and Wall Street* warned of the tenuous connection of property to

ownership by espousing caution in a time of post-war prosperity, where the increasing distance between the two foreshadowed the erosion of its integrity (Ripley,1927). With the beginning of the Corporate Age, the agency problem moved from theoretical to practical and became a reality for owners and controlling agents. The conventionally accepted conception of corporate governance is Berle and Means' (1932) seminal book *The Modern Corporation and Private Property.* The dominance of corporations in expanding products and resources from the Second Industrial Revolution led to what we now know as modern corporations. These modern corporations consisted of massive infrastructure with dispersed ownership separated from control and required a new type of governance hence corporate governance (Berle and Means, 1932; Gevurtz, 2004).

The inner workings of corporate governance, however, are shrouded in a view restricted to inputs (issues) and outputs (decisions). The board of directors is the entity responsible for moving from issues to decisions, but little is known about how decisions are made. The restricted view is known as the 'black box' of board governance and represents a theory-practice gap in resolving the agency problem (Jensen and Meckling, 1976; Neill and Dulewicz, 2010; Rost and Osterloh, 2010). The result is a lack of insight into the organization's board governance, processes, and leaders' decisions (Neill and Dulewicz, 2010). Researchers have turned to multiple theories to explain actions, behaviours, and outcomes that occur within the 'black box' such as agency, stewardship, and stakeholder theories (Brunninge, O., Nordqvist, M. and Wiklund, J., 2007; Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Cornforth, 2002; Cornforth, 2012; Dalton et al., 2007). However, the problem remains; though there is a theoretical understanding of how board governance may happen and what happened after the fact, modern research fails to penetrate the 'black box' of the inner workings of board governance in real-time. Therefore, it will be crucial to apply a multi-theoretical approach within my project to see the inner workings of board governance and pierce the veil of the 'black box'.

There is a lively debate on two views of the agency problem centred on agency and stewardship theories. Theorists that subscribe to agency theory argue that the property manager (controller) may have different interests than the owner of the property, which could lead to adverse results for the owner (Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Van

Puyvelde et al., 2012; Hendry, 2005; Jensen and Meckling, 1976; Dalton et al., 2007; Schillemans, 2013). Therefore, boards of directors and other shareholder oversight bodies must keep these divergent interests in check (Cornforth, 2002; Filatotchev and Wright, 2011). Wells' (2009) points out that focusing on divergent interests being potentially negative assumes a zero-sum definition of agency. If self-interest motivates an agent and their interest diverges from the principal's interests in a way that serves one over the other, then a win-lose scenario is assumed. Thus, agency theory proceeds with an argument where either the principal or the agent must lose. The power struggle that this adversarial condition creates is at the core of the tensions organizational members experience when governing.

Stewardship theory proposes an alternative view. Theorists who subscribe to the theory assert that the divergent interests could be complementary, with both parties motivated to advance their interests and the organization's interests concurrently, but in different ways. Stewardship theorists advocate a different and more collaborative line of reasoning. Schillemans (2013) states that the stewardship theory was created as an alternative to agency theory, focusing instead on the shared norms and goals between stewards and partners, seeking a collective view of leadership rather than a centralized one. Donaldson (2005) argues that the stewardship theory is functionalistic. The manager acts as an agent to increase performance as their obligation to the organization, and the manager's agency does not necessarily preclude its goals. Stewardship theory is from the same systems-thinking approach as agency theory (Tacon, Walters and Cornforth, 2017); however, it represents an approach to the agency problem from a human relations perspective opposite agency theory. Stewardship theory casts managers as good stewards or partners instead of adversaries, with the board of directors as a partner to management (Davis et al., 1997; Cornforth, 2002). Stewardship theory also seeks to understand the conditions that allow managers (controllers) of property to act in ways that align with the partners (owners) (Schillemans, 2013). Therefore, Stewardship theory is an alternate view that may help navigate the tensions involved in governance through collective rather than adversarial approaches.

A confounding factor of governance related to the agency problem remains the dynamic nature of diverging interests. While viewing the problem through agency or stewardship theories potentially casts the divergence as adverse or collaborative, the reality is much more nuanced. Since interests change constantly, organizational members must navigate them constantly, providing a growing range of outcomes and impacts. Therefore, there is a continuum full of choices where the impacts are varied and subjective (Van Puyvelde et al., 2012). Members caught in the swirls and eddies of changing environments may also have difficulty maintaining balance while navigating the change, causing misalignment on goals. Much of the research refers to intentional choices that may result in diverging interests. However, day-to-day operations are messy, and interests may diverge simply because of miscommunication or other unintended factors. Since diverging interests are viewed through multiple theoretical lenses, are intended and unintended, and exist on a continuum between agency and stewardship, it will be crucial to examine the project's events with these categories in mind.

Since the agency problem results from the separation between owners and controllers of property within corporations, and the dominant form of resolving the agency problem is governance through a board of directors, it makes sense to focus on board governance for my workplace problem. Having established a connection between the agency problem, corporate governance, and the major theories in the extant literature to board governance, I next clarify the similarities and differences between non-profit and for-profit organizations. Specifically, I explain and justify whether applying the same theories to both contexts is appropriate for my research or if they are two different theoretical subsets.

2.5 Board Governance in Non-profit and For-profit Corporations

From the outset, it is important to note that the preponderance of research and evidence in the extant literature is on for-profit corporate governance, with non-profit governance being a limited focus within the field. However, there are research cases that cross the non-profit/for-profit barrier and establish a comparison. For example, non-profits and for-profits may have different definitions of what constitutes profit. A comparative study offering insight into the differences between non-profit and for-profit organizations

when considering profit definitions was conducted by Duque-Zuluaga and Schneider (2008). For their comparison, the authors of the study used “market orientation”, defined as “the organizational culture that most effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviours for creating superior value for buyers and, thus, continuous performance for the business.” (Duque-Zuluaga and Schneider, 2008, 5–6). The comparison is an adaptation of market orientation into social orientation, defined as “the organizational belief and culture that create and align behaviours for offering/delivering services that are worthy for society, thus fulfilling the non-profit organizational mission (focus).” (Duque-Zuluaga and Schneider, 2008, p.9).

The important distinction made in this comparison is the introduction of societal impact and involvement in the non-profit context. Market-oriented organizations (for-profit) can view people as human capital producing a profit reflecting their mission for increasing shareholder/stakeholder value (Phillips and Pittman, 2014; Jaskyte, 2018). There are legal protections in place in the US to ensure that is the case. However, non-profits have a different definition of profit, choosing instead to seek an outcome that maximizes social benefit. The similarities between non-profits and for-profits in this research suggest that both organizations seek to maximize value to their stakeholders. However, where for-profits have stakeholders interested in financial equity, non-profits have stakeholders interested in societal equity. With the introduction of for-profits into the social services sector, this line is blurred. Social services are rarely profitable by design to maximize the value to the stakeholders instead of the shareholders. Therefore, the implication is that non-profits and for-profits will be negotiating their missions and definitions of ‘value’ and profit’ as they compete in the sector. Duque-Zuluaga and Schneider's (2008) research demonstrates that traditional for-profit models are adaptable to non-profit settings and vice versa. The implication for my research is that the theories at the core of their profit definitions are interchangeable between for-profits and non-profits.

Another comparison between for-profits and non-profits is in the distance between work and leadership required for governance. In for-profit scenarios, while the board is critical for leadership, the work is often remotely distanced by physical and cognitive

distance depending on the culture Minichilli, A., Zattoni, A., Nielsen, S., Huse, M., 2012; Davis et al., 1997). For-profit organizations tend to see people as human capital related to innovation and capacity, placing a much heavier emphasis on the board of directors as determining organizational strength (Phillips and Pittman, 2014; Jaskyte, 2018). Non-profit boards are more likely to be made up of volunteers who have been brought together by a common social impact interest, sometimes of a critical nature. Non-profit organizations also represent community members gathered around a social issue that impacts them directly and indirectly (Phillips and Pittman, 2014).

To summarize, for-profits tend to base relationships on value propositions measured in financial terms that rely on processes and leadership structure. These relationships tend to reach across occupations and depend on a community's geography or demographics. In contrast, non-profits tend to measure value propositions in societal impact terms, which can be financial or otherwise. It follows that the topics in non-profit organizations, strategic or otherwise, tend to be less commonly based on abstract constructs such as finance or economics. Instead, they tend to be more personal, more heavily weighing in on affective processes involving leadership style and relationships. However, a common ground for both non-profits and for-profits is that they both require clearly defined leadership styles and roles, relationships, and processes to operate within the context of their missions.

Despite the differences, researchers consistently use the same theories and constructs for non-profit and for-profit organizations. In their empirical study, Zhu et al. (2016) also discovered that underlying psychological mechanisms for board processes include board cohesiveness, cognitive conflict, and affective conflict, common to both for-profit and non-profit firms. The lack of awareness on how these three underlying processes are affecting the board's members and decision-making processes can lead to cognitive dissonance, board division, and affective dissonance, hampering the function of the body and inhibiting the performance of the firm (Morrison and Milliken, 2000; Zhu et al., 2016). However, these issues are not specific to either non-profits or for-profits; they occur regularly in both.

Corporations are increasingly called upon to consider the social and financial impact (Duque-Zuluaga and Schneider, 2008; Phillips and Pittman, 2014). They also conclude that the common ground of criteria for measuring Organizational Effectiveness and Performance (OEP) is a very generalized set. The set contains productivity/efficiency, growth and market share, and quality, commonly found in both for-profit and non-profit research (Baruch and Ramalho, 2006). In line with their reasoning, Chambers and Cornforth (2010) also concluded that private and public governance are similar, and therefore, research is relevant across contexts. There is strong support that non-profit and for-profit organizations share many of the same theories and constructs.

The benefits of treating for-profits and non-profits the same are multi-fold. Since leadership, board members, and staff have experiences in both the for-profit and non-profit realms treating them the same allows for methods that bridge the gaps. Non-profits can also benefit from the practices of for-profits, improving their operational efficiency. Risks may include not considering the unique nature of non-profits. For-profits are primarily concerned with making a profit, whereas non-profits focus on goals other than profit. While these two goals do not necessarily conflict, they are susceptible to the same issues I have outlined within the agency problem (Ryan, 2002). While there are some risks, the benefits appear to outweigh the risks greatly, and there is no evidence that the two are incompatible while researchers believe they are not exclusive (Baruch and Ramalho, 2006). Therefore, it follows that I can apply the same theories and perspectives in a critical examination of governance in non-profit and for-profit organizations. In the next section, I explore how those theories and perspectives have led to themes within the field of board governance.

2.6 Themes – Roles, Leadership, and Processes

There is a wide range of topics and theories within the field of board governance. The topics' breadth can be overwhelming, and the breadth may be due to attempts to separate for-profit and non-profit organizations by examining themes (Friedrich, T.L., Vessey, W.B., Schuelke, M.J., Ruark, G.A., Mumford, M.D., 2009; Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Smith, 2010; Herman and Renz, 2008). However, there is a great benefit to examining the field through themes. It clarifies board governance's complexity, one of

the critical issues leading to the 'black box' phenomena. From the examination, themes emerge such as relationships, leadership, roles, environment, structure, and processes (Hyndman and McDonnell, 2009; Kopaneva and Sias, 2015). These themes are more commonly researched in broader fields of study and connect to existing research. For example, Smith (2010) found themes related to the director's insight from 32 New Zealand corporations: board informational trust, mutual respect, diversity, director ability and succession planning. Smith also found four main subthemes related to relationships. The subthemes included relationships between fellow directors, the board and the management team, the board and the CEO, individuals, and their impact on internal and external board relationships. The focus on leaders' perspectives on the organization indicates a complexity to the interface between internal and external factors and environment and the processes by which they interact (Smith 2010, p.59). Themes such as leadership styles, roles, and processes confirm and validate the research introduced by Cornforth and Chambers. The key to building a solid theoretical underpinning for my research project will be connecting these themes to the core theories and demonstrating how they apply to the project.

Narrowing the field of themes can be challenging, however, and using theories to cast light on the themes starts to give structure to a framework (Coule, 2015; Cornforth, 2002; Chambers and Cornforth, 2010). Qualitative researchers have been trying to answer how these concepts and abstract theories apply to actual daily operations. Coule (2015) provides insight into how to accomplish a multi-theoretical view of the themes in a study with four organizations over a 6-month time frame. Using 23 interviews captured from various organizations, the researcher used the data to develop first and second-order codes that revealed themes connected to major theories. The conceptualizes the relationship between governance and accountability using comparative case studies from a critical management studies perspective, as seen in table 1. Coule relates emergent themes with the extant literature's major theories.

Theory	Related Themes	Governance	Accountability
Agency	Conformance, security, mission, and compliance	Board partners and Managers are driven by different interests	Instrumental Accountability to resource providers. Rule-based. Strong sense of "felt" accountability toward the organisational mission. Conceptions of board-staff accountability: Transactional - based on reciprocity . Board focused on HRM legislation and formal practices promoting upward accountability. CEO holds staff accountable, board holds CEO accountable. Environment-Organisation Accountability: upward focus prioritising compliance with legal and regulatory funding requirements
Stewardship	Expertise, stewards, performance, strategy	Partnership and Support from the board partners in relation to the manager	
Democratic	Representation, policy, structure	Members and the public have different interests, democratic process for decision-making	Broad view of Accountability: Values-driven and constantly negotiated with internal and external stakeholders to balance upward and downward accountability pulls. Conceptions of board-staff accountability: Moves beyond legal and formal HRM practices. Expressive accountability, members are treated in congruence with values expressed in the organisation's work, structure, and processes. Conceptions of environment-organisation accountability: moves beyond basic instrumental accountability to expressive forms involving self-perception of community role and mission.
Stakeholder	Representation, stakeholders	Stakeholders and organisations have different interests, explicit focus on stakeholder oversight and control of management	

Table 1- Table of Theories and their related themes adapted from (Coule, 2015)

They also draw a direct connection between agency theory and conformance roles and stewardship theory and performance roles. Coule (2015) reinforces that agency theory is primarily concerned with conformance and compliance managed using centralized leadership through oversight and control. Stewardship theory is primarily concerned with performance and collective leadership where there are diverging interests. Watson et al. (2020) also address the paradoxes that arise from tensions such as control-collaboration conflicts, identifying that agency or stewardship theories alone do not explain the tensions organizations face. Solomon and Huse (2019) confirms these tensions through direct observations and interviews with executives in Norwegian companies but still recommend multi-theoretical approaches to unlock the dynamic inner workings while in process. The multi-theoretical approach presents a way of understanding the multiple facets of governance that is not tied to one dimension or overly committed to a line of reasoning; rather, it is a template for understanding the process. I

incorporate the multi-theory lens on each of the themes and their related tensions to create a framework that helps members intentionally navigate the processes, roles, and leadership they employ in the strategic planning process. In the following section, I clarify what tensions are, how they relate to my project and their basis in the extant literature.

2.7 Tensions of Board Governance

Tensions are present in the decisions that leaders make within organizations because the nature of their decisions represents opportunity costs and sometimes paradoxes (Demb and Neubauer, 1992; Chambers and Cornforth, 2010). These tensions can range from working together to how the organization is structured (Solomon and Huse, 2019; Ferrer et al., 2020). I seek to harness the tensions inherent to themes of roles, process, and leadership to achieve my organization's goals within the research project. To that end, understanding tensions in Board Governance are crucial to navigating them (Solomon and Huse, 2019).

Cornforth (2002) and Chambers and Cornforth (2010) are two critical pieces of research that move beyond theories and outcomes (inputs and outputs) and start to examine the themes of choices board members make and how to navigate them through understanding tensions. Thus, they make a prime place from which to begin building my framework. Cornforth (2002) and Chambers and Cornforth (2010) argue that understanding tensions is essential because they represent an organizational member's decision-making pressure within a context of finite resources of time and energy. Tensions have also become prevalent as a qualitative research tool useful for identifying data where messy and hard-to-pin-down interactions are occurring (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008; Gergen and Gergen, 2000). According to Cornforth (2002), these tensions are experienced as board members navigate their identities as representatives of stakeholders and experts driving performance, which suggests conflicting roles of performance and conformance, relationships of control and support, and accountability to multiple stakeholders. To ground these tensions in existing theory, Cornforth discussed how traditional theories such as agency, stewardship, stakeholder theory related to the idea that members of an organization must navigate the tensions when governing. However, Cornforth did not apply the tensions, theories, or concepts, nor give a way to

apply them to real-world examples leaving a strong argument for using themes and tensions but unconvincing conclusions on applying them. For instance, Cornforth concludes expertise is necessary for driving performance and representing stakeholder interests without clear evidence to support the connection. As a result, the conclusions are not widely accepted, nor are they sufficiently proven within the research. Nevertheless, Cornforth's argument that tension exists as board members choose among themes involving leadership styles, roles, and governance processes is intriguing and bears a closer look.

Chambers and Cornforth (2010) published a chapter based on Cornforth's original work that went much farther in grounding the tensions in the theories of extant literature and began to create a framework by which to understand those tensions such as external versus internal and conformance versus performance borrowed from Garratt (2010). The research concludes that governance of organizations by boards is far more complex and intricate, requiring a much deeper look into the board's dynamics (Chambers and Cornforth, 2010). Crucially, the researchers continue to use tensions to understand the inner workings of board governance and identify themes that board members face, such as roles, identities, relationships, and resources. By grounding the themes and tensions in the extant theories and history and applying those themes and tensions to real-world scenarios, I will create a framework for navigating the tensions that can facilitate change at my workplace. First, I will examine the tensions themselves, their base theories, and how they relate to themes of leadership, roles, and processes.

2.8 Central versus Collective Leadership

Since the degree to which leaders centralize their perspectives or act collectively can impact stakeholders, choosing to centralize or not becomes a key tension (Höglund et al., 2018). A more centralized approach can impact more focused and faster results due to the streamlined and one-way nature of the direction given. Still, it may also have consequences, potentially leaving gaps in leadership (Mataira et al., 2014) or unsustainable results (Denis, J.-L., Lamothe, L. and Langley, A., 2001). Collective leadership involves multiple stakeholders. While the approach may take longer simply because of the number of stakeholders involved and the processes required to achieve

it, a strong case for these changes is more sustainable and palatable to the stakeholders involved (Denis et al., 2001). The two leadership types can be used and represented in varying degrees as a situational choice (Van Puyvelde et al., 2016). Therefore, how leaders make this choice must be considered as members navigate the tension between the two. A deeper understanding of centralized and collective leadership can help members navigate this tension.

The individualistic 20th-century dominant paradigm for Board Governance, characterized by viewing the principal-agent relationship as one to be resolved by individuals (Fram, 2016, 702–722), harkens to the 'Trait' or 'Great Man' approach to leadership (Badaracco, 1998). A central figure as the 'head' of an organization has a long history. Centralized leadership, then, is where the focus is on a manager or the head of an organization (Friedrich et al., 2009), and they hold the ability to dictate the degree to which they engage others in the decision-making process (Cornforth, 2002; Vallas, 2003; Rost and Osterloh, 2010). Agency theory aligns most closely with this perspective, advocating control directly to the agents and decision-makers (Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Van Puyvelde et al., 2012; Dalton et al., 2007; Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Cornforth, 2002). By this reasoning, I link centralized leadership to agency theory.

On the other hand, collective leadership advocates multiple actors with different but complementary roles working together to achieve substantive change (Denis et al., 2001). Collective leadership also assumes varying degrees of talent and experience. Friedrich et al. (2009, pp.935–36) cite four assumptions about collective leadership: 1) team members are not all created equal, 2) the collective leadership process is information-based 3) it is an emergent process that does not remove the need for leadership roles and processes 4) it is not static and accentuates the need for team-level processes 5) it is not a simple effect or a single causal chain, more a pattern of effects and systems. Stewardship theory is the most closely aligned theory with this approach as it starts with the assumption that the diverging interests are still aligned in purpose (Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Schillemans, 2013; Davis et al., 1997). Stewardship theory involves a partnering or collective approach that views the agent as a partner interested in the welfare and the organization's progress aligned with the owners (Chambers and

Cornforth, 2010; Cornforth, 2002). The manager seeks to fulfil their obligations and concurrently enrich the organization and themselves (Tacon, R., Walters, G. and Cornforth, C., 2017). Therefore, I link collective leadership to stewardship theory.

In addition to understanding the tension, members need a structured way to navigate it. In a case study of two Canadian healthcare sector organizations, Denis, Lamothe, and Langley asked: “How can leaders achieve deliberate strategic change in organizations where strategic leadership roles are shared, objectives are divergent, and power is diffuse?” Denis et al. (2001, p.33). The research question describes the issues at the core of the agency problem, such as achieving deliberate change, divergent interests, and diffuse power. The researchers define three types of coupling in collective leadership scenarios: strategic (between members of the leadership team), organizational (between the leadership team and their internal constituencies), and environmental between the team and the organization’s external environment). Denis et al. (2001) also found that unified collective leadership is fragile and cyclical due to the difficulty maintaining the three coupling types consistently. I use these three coupling types within my developing framework to help map the tensions between central and collective leadership tension.

2.9 Conformance versus Performance

Trying to manage large groups of people purely democratically becomes prohibitive as groups grow (Gevurtz, 2004). Traditional governance in the Middle Ages, up to the development of corporate America, struggled with this phenomenon. Early corporations operated based on a simple law precept, stating, “what touches all should be consented to by all” (Gevurtz 2004, p.170). The shift in control of companies to passive investors with active managers combined with the rapid growth in the size of companies and their investors ushered in a new corporate governance style bringing the agency problem to the forefront (Dalton et al., 2007). Dalton et al. (2007), reflect the sentiment of most agency theorists, arguing that mitigating the fundamental agency problem should be through regulation and oversight, such as through a board of directors. Additionally, the board’s primary role is conformance of the agents to board oversight and the organization to its environment’s regulations and policies. Viewing oversight by a board of directors as

the best check and balance for the agent has become the dominant form of governance in modern corporations globally (Cornforth, 2002). According to Tacon et al. (2017), this perspective represents a “unitary logic” based on a “systems-control approach” to enact “instrumental accountability” rather than relying on the actors to be accountable on their own. Agency theory, therefore, is linked to conformance as a form of board governance in the role of oversight.

Researchers that subscribe to stewardship theory, on the other hand, contend that the board can never indeed be independent and that an individualistic view of leadership is an inaccurate view of how boards and managers interact (Donaldson, 1990). Donaldson (1990), in Figure 1, demonstrates how descriptive focus on conflicts of interest seeks to mitigate negative aspects of diverging interests through oversight in line with agency theory’s behavioural characteristics. Conversely, a focus on normative behaviours combined with team coordination can result in organizations designed to act as stewards where diverging interests are complementary. Additionally, Donaldson (1990) argued that the negative attribution of diverging interests between agents and owners is based on a negative ‘model of man’, despite multiple models available to explore the motivations for converging interests.

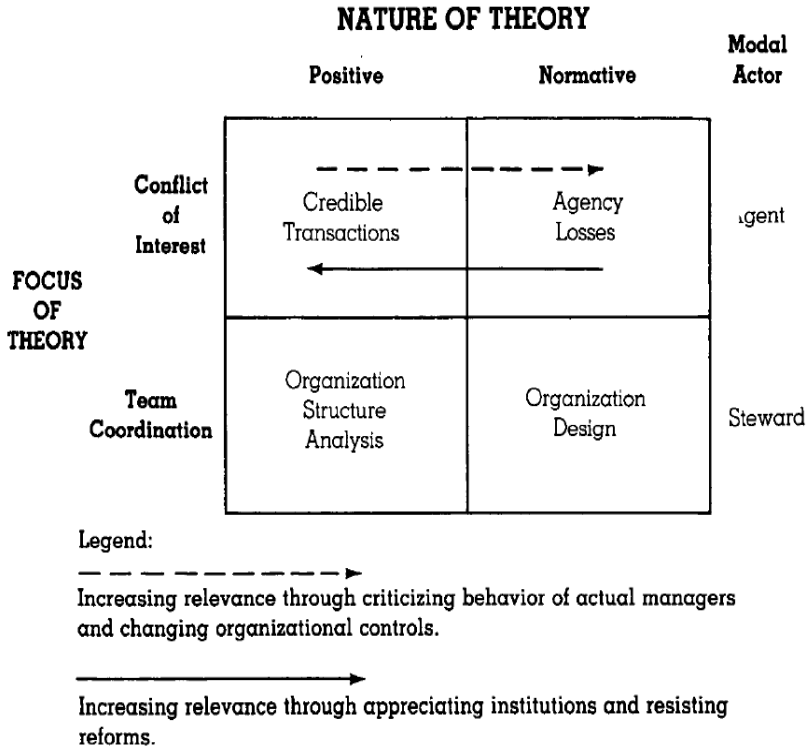


Figure 1- Key distinctions between organizational economic and organizational structure theories

Viewing the principal-agent relationship as only capable of a pure agency precludes the necessary processes and collaboration for governance from occurring (Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Denis et al., 2001). Davis et al. (1997) proposed an agency/steward choice table to demonstrate the active choice agents and principals make in the theoretical model displayed in Figure 2. Davis et al. (1997) identify that both managers and principals choose between agency and stewardship.

When the manager and principal choose the same roles, the mutual agency can minimize potential costs or mutual stewardship to maximize potential performance through a mutual stewardship relationship. Where their roles selections diverge, the party that chooses stewardship can experience negative effects and betrayal. Davis et al.'s (1997; 1997) proposition is that the most beneficial choice for both parties is adopting steward as the relationship. Having already connected conformance roles and agency

theory, and performance roles and stewardship theory (Chambers and Cornforth, 2010), this model can understand the roles that principals and managers choose between an agent and steward, respectively, conformance and performance. The implications are that an intentional choice by the principals (board of directors) and the agent (CEO/Executive Director) of roles can lead to a mutual stewardship relationship negating opportunism and maximising performance. When designing my framework, I will incorporate this model to capture the intentional decision to engage in a conformance or performance role. In the next section, I examine the final tension between internal and external processes.

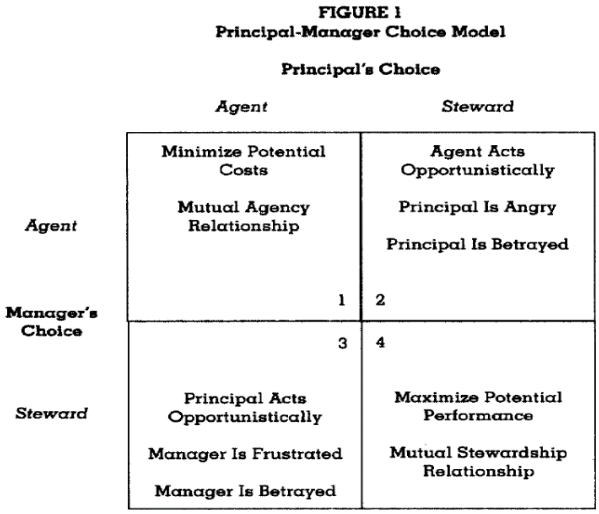


Figure 2- Agency/Steward Choice Table

2.10 Internal vs External Processes

Perspectives on internal processes are wide-ranging and extensive research has been done in the field of governance. Waterman et al. (1980) introduced a model in the "Seven 'S' model" (Figure 3)(Katsioloudes and Abouhanian, 2009; Waterman et al., 1980) that took a holistic look at an organization and provided a framework for examining the internal processes working within. The idea is that effective organizational change involves the relationship between structure, strategy, systems, style, skills, staff, and superordinate goals (Waterman, R.J., Peters, T.J. and Phillips, J.R., 1980).

The main idea behind organizing the factors into a model was to express interconnectedness and complexity beyond structure and strategy (Figure 3). Of special note in this model is the focus the author's place on systems as the factor most likely to

dominate the others (Waterman et al., 1980). Systems and processes are used interchangeably by the author, and in this model, they exist separate from processes that connect the different nodes. The separation implies that processes interact with other factors via a process. Higgins (2005) updated this model to an '8 S' model eliminating skills and adding in resources and strategic performance, yet still holding to using the model to interpret the interconnectedness of the factors and the processes by which they interact. Higgins (2005) also defines the context of being aligned or non-aligned, which implies another level or process by which the factors must communicate to produce alignment to achieve efficiency or progress (Figure 4). I will map internal processes using these models as visual representations of how an organization enacts governance and achieves contextual alignment in applying my framework to the workplace problem. Since I have identified a theory and system for identifying internal processes and organizing them into a relatable form, I turn my attention to external processes.

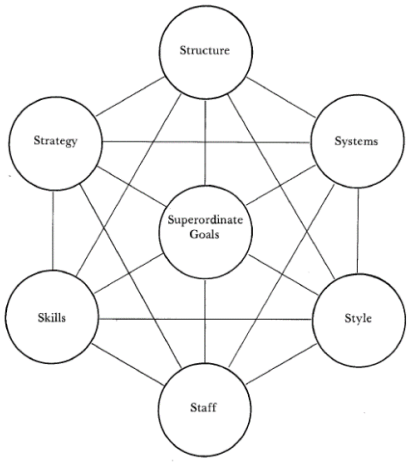


Figure 4 – Higgins' Seven S Model

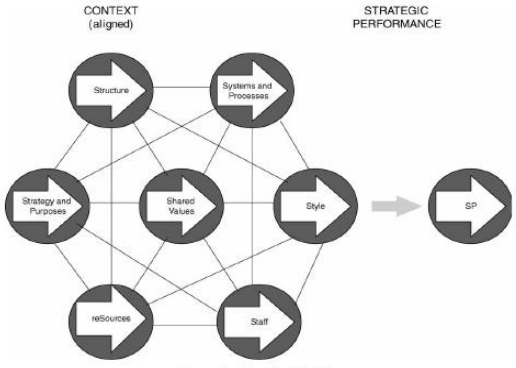


Figure 1. Aligned eight 'S's

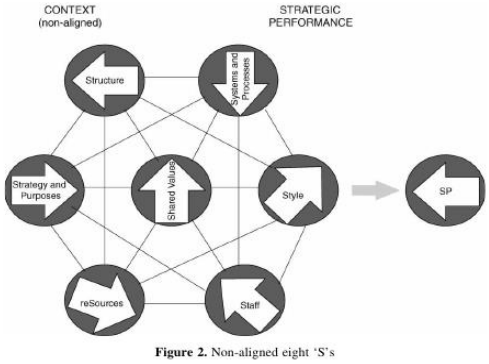


Figure 2. Non-aligned eight 'S's

Figure 3 – Higgins' Eight S Models – aligned and non-aligned processes

2.11 External

Organizations exist in an ecological context with interdependence on external stakeholders (Hillman, A.J., Withers, M.C. and Collins, B.J., 2009; Hillman and Dalziel, 2003). These processes are often out of the organization's control that must consider and react to external stimuli. Empirical evidence in the extant literature supports the use of Resource Dependence Theory (RDT) as a successful perspective in understanding how organizations react to their ecological environment (Hillman et al., 2009). Researchers have used RDT in the 40 years since first proposed to explain how organizations react to those external forces such as regulatory agencies, competition, networks, and resources (Hillman et al., 2009). Hillman, Withers, and Collins go further than the original authors of RDT (Pfeffer and Salancik, 2003), proposing that boards' roles include managing those external dependencies, reducing environmental uncertainty, and reducing environmental interdependency costs (Hillman, Cannella and Paetzold, 2000). RDT, related to boards of directors, explains how the board navigates the fit between the CEO's behaviours and the environmental factors the firm is facing (Nielsen and Huse, 2010; Minichilli et al., 2012). RDT can also be a lens from which to view how well the organization's internal factors fit with the external forces the organization is facing. This fit is critical in the enactment of the implementation of a long-term strategic plan as well and may bridge the gap between planning (input) and outcomes (output), generating critical insight into the inner workings of strategic board implementation (Stacey, 2011; Neill and Dulewicz, 2010). Therefore, I will use RDT to understand how internal and external processes interact.

2.12 Frameworks

I have defined the initial research objective as navigating leadership roles, performance, and processes in a changing landscape. Having clarified the tensions and the linked theories, I next ensure rigour and relevance in linking them to my workplace problem. To do this, I will employ existing frameworks from the extant literature. Using existing frameworks will strengthen applying theories to real-world examples while guiding the analysis of the data. I start with existing frameworks addressing the tensions

of conformance and compliance roles, centralized and collective leadership, and internal and external processes.

Cornforth (2002), and then Chambers and Cornforth (2010; 2002), in their research on Board Governance, narrow the field to tensions within governance themes, using insights from Tricker (1997) and Garratt (2010). Chambers and Cornforth's framework relies on the idea that understanding how members enact governance requires the researcher to understand the choices the members are making, the roles with which they identify, and the tension that occurs within each as they navigate them (Figure 1, p.36) (Chambers and Cornforth, 2010). In their adapted framework, Chambers and Cornforth (2010) address three main components: internal versus external focus, short-term versus long-term time frame, and conformance versus performance leadership styles. They immediately recognize that the framework is limited and creates paradoxes that make navigating structural issues, roles, and behaviours of boards difficult. For example, conformance and performance are given theoretical frames, with agency theory most closely associated with conformance. While stewardship theory is most closely associated with performance, Chambers and Cornforth (2010) frame accountability and policy formation as long-term externally focused goals. However, one of the directors' primary jobs is forming internal systems and policies from which to govern. Within the framework constraints, they start with the focus on supervision in the short term and strategic thinking in the long term. This approach implies centralized leadership behaviours in the short term and collective in the long term.

If we were to view agency theory on a continuum, as Van Puyvelde et al. (2012) suggests, the more internally focused the leader is, the more their role is short-term and agency-based. As they move towards a long-term or external focus, their role is more collective and collaborative. Since agency is associated with conformance and stewardship with performance, there could be an agency focus in the short term and a stewardship focus in the long term. The interplay between temporal, contextual, and role selection creates the paradox that Cornforth (2002) points to in categorizing how a leader can act based on theory. However, the processes that occur could be more concerned with fluidity and flexibility of the facts on the ground and less understandable through the

lens of a single theory. Chambers and Cornforth (2010) recognize the problems with creating such narrow and prescriptive categories for leaders engaged in a process and conclude with suggestions for constructing a path that connects structure, roles, and behaviours and updating theories application in the light of a changing field. Therefore, I view internal and external processes as separate from the conformance and performance roles or short and long-term time frames to examine them through the lens of multiple theories such as agency theory, stewardship theory, and stakeholder theory in my framework.

Friedrich et al. (2009), in their work on a collective leadership framework, identified the role that collective and centralized leadership plays in navigating the Agency problem. Friedrich et al. (2009) identified the dominant paradigm as an individualistic understanding of leadership, coming from one or a few people when leadership in real-time plays out in a much more dispersed fashion. This tension in leadership plays out in other research as well. Much like the 8S's model (Higgins, 2005), Friedrich's collective leadership framework identifies the importance of the individual components of internal processes and the direction of interaction that occurs. Unlike Higgins' model, however, the Friedrich model addresses the nature of the interaction and how baseline leadership and team processes differ from ley collective leadership constructs. In this framework, I will assume that baseline leadership and team processes refer to dominant paradigms of positivist agency-based approaches to leadership, including centralized and hierarchical leadership.

I then interpret the data in Table 2, an adapted table that shows these different constructs, to demonstrate how collective leadership is defined differently. For example, baseline processes include routine structuring and maintenance of the group, mission, and team processes. Outcomes are categorized the same whether key collective constructs are employed or not. The difference comes in the outcomes themselves. Since I define baseline leadership as singular or centralized, introducing the key collective leadership constructs such as Leader/Team Exchange and Team Performance Parameters provides an alternative and collective perspective. The collective constructs involve delegation, empowerment, shared leadership, voice, team self-management, and

collaborative problem-solving (Friedrich et al., 2009). Stemming from the initial constructs, leadership decentralizes its power and uses other constructs such as communication to create Leader Networks, Team Networks, and engage in Problem Setting. These constructs then lend to the outcome process of Team Performance Capabilities by expanding and enhancing those capabilities. In essence, the key collective leadership constructs enhance the baseline leadership, team processes, and outcomes for the organization. Consistent with the research I found related to the tensions, the framework includes insight into how an organization navigates networking, centralized leadership, processes, performance, and norms (conformance). Therefore, I will understand collective leadership in this project as leadership characteristics described by Friedrich's key collective leadership constructs and centralized leadership as baseline leadership and team processes. So far, I have defined an existing framework to understand the internal processes and tensions of governance and identified Resource Dependence Theory (RDT) as the lens through which I view the external processes. Next, I create a thematic model to apply the extant literature to my workplace problem and understand better the context the CNUW exists within, the internal workings that factor into decisions, and sensemaking in the organization.

Baseline Leadership and Team Processes	Key Collective Leadership Constructs	Outcomes
Leadership Structuring and Maintenance of Group	Leader Skills	Team Performance Capabilities
Mission	Leader Network	Immediate Outcomes
Team Processes	Leader/Team Exchange	Long-Term Outcomes
	Communication	
	Problem Setting	
	Team Performance Parameters	
	Team Affective Climate	
	Team Network	

Table 2 - Adapted from Friedrich's framework for understanding collective leadership

2.13 A Framework for piercing the veil of the 'Black Box.'

According to Hillman et al. (2009), non-profit organizations exist within an ecological context in the social services sector. Therefore, it makes sense to visualize the CNUW within a local ecological context of a resource environment controlled by external agencies, networks, and stakeholders. Figure 5 displays the CNUW in this context, as indicated by the CNUW located within the larger circle of the ecological context. Since I

established earlier in the chapter that themes of roles, leadership style, and processes are crucial to how organizational members navigate sensemaking in the organization, it also makes sense to view them in the light of the associated theories. In Figure 5, I visually juxtaposed the themes of roles, leadership, and processes with their associated tensions within the dominant and alternative theoretical approaches of stewardship and agency theories in the box on the figure's left. I have also established that the behaviours within the tensions exist on a continuum. These tensions have stewardship theory on one end and agency theory on the other. The framework details this relationship as contained within the organization. The box on the left of the diagram visually represents a window into the ‘black box’ of non-profit corporate governance at the CNUW (Neill and Dulewicz, 2010; Rost and Osterloh, 2010). By having a framework for how members make sense of their decisions, they are better armed to make those decisions consistently. Identifying the tensions before our discussions and then referring to them during the process will allow us to engage in reflexive cycles of action and adjustment to guide our strategic planning process. Especially in uncertainty or an impasse, we will use the framework to identify our current position as individuals or board directors. Alignment on these perceptions facilitates clearing roadblocks.

To clear roadblocks, I will use questions based on the framework to generate insight within members based on agency and stewardship choices for conformance and performance role decisions. When deciding whether to centralize control or lead collectively, I will refer to the framework to identify how we engage in the decisions and sensemaking in balance with other aspects of the organization. Lastly, I will use the Eight ‘S’ model (Higgins, 2005) of successful strategy execution to map the organization’s internal and external processes and understand how we can navigate them to align on strategic planning.

2.14 Summary

In summary, three tensions emerged from Cornforth’s original work in identifying the models and tensions non-profits face (Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Cornforth, 2002) in navigating the changing landscape of the social services sector (Ryan, 2002). Themes within board governance of non-profits include roles, leadership, and processes.

Conformance roles, centralized leadership, and internal process are linked to agency theory, while performance roles, collective leadership, and external processes link to stewardship theory. The tensions, therefore, emerge as continuums as organizational members navigate governance choices. The theories, themes, and tensions that emerged from the literature review led me to frameworks that place them in an understandable model from which I can better apply them to my workplace problem. However, the existing frameworks leave crucial gaps in connecting to governance and need to be modified in context to suit my research. Therefore, I have developed a thematic model (Figure 5) based on the tensions and themes that emerged from the literature review as tensions within themes involved in navigating the agency problem within my research project context. Understanding tensions through this framework will assist the participants in navigating those tensions more efficiently. I connected tensions to continuums based on their related theories that the organization members must constantly navigate while governing. I have also presented strong evidence that a collective and asset-based (stewardship) approach is a more effective alternative than an individual deficit-based (agency) approach. In the next section, I justify and explain the use of a collective strengths-based mode within an action research methodology.

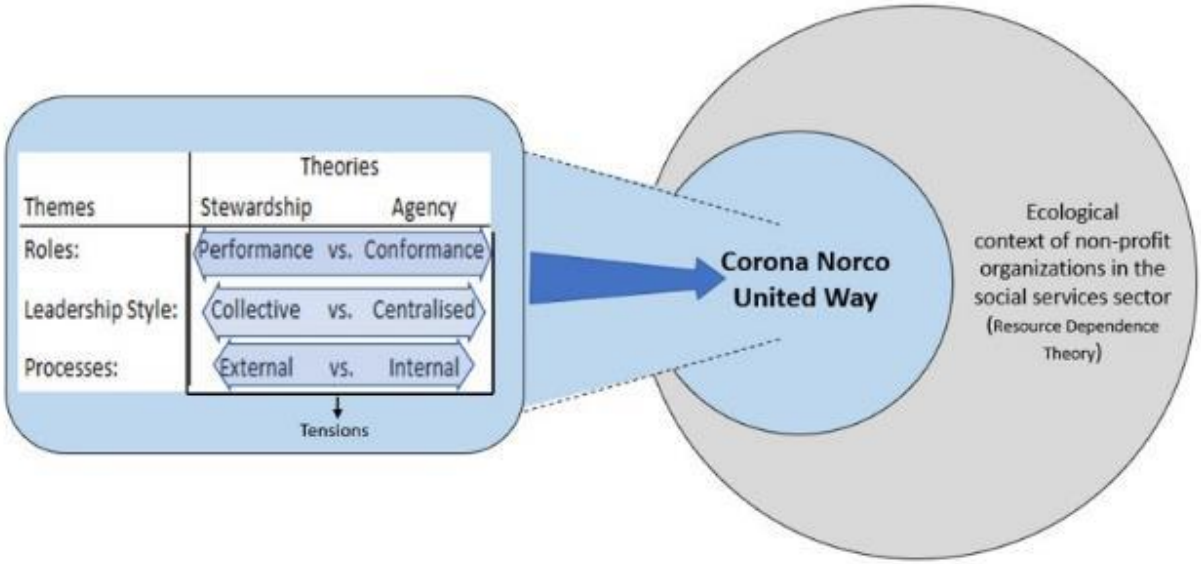


Figure 5 - Framework for visualizing the tension of board governance in a non-profit organization.

3 Methods and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

One of the difficulties in non-profit organizations I have encountered over many years of volunteering is balancing between inspiring volunteers and governance realities. Problems, such as homelessness, are substantial, systemic, have become institutional over time, and can feel overwhelming. Perseverance in the face of societal issues that involve our communities and neighbours' health, and welfare can be deeply personal and impactful. Approaching societal issues as problems can feel like an overwhelming amount of negative space to fill. Therefore, the difficulties with retention and progress in problem-solving within non-profit organizations may link to how they approach issues.

In the literature review chapter, I established that agency theory is the dominant approach for governance in non-profit and for-profit organizations. I also established that the basic premise of Agency theory is that the divergence of interests between the agent and the owner results in the agent not representing the interests of the owner resulting in adverse outcomes built on a deficit-based assumption that the impact is negative (Parmar, B.L., Freeman, R.E., Harrison, J.S., Wicks, A.C., Purnell, L. and De Colle, S., 2010; Ngomane, 2004). The root of the deficit-based view is the assumption that the agent is pursuing their enrichment at the expense of the owner. Some suggest that the basic premise of the nature of human beings is at play. Barry Schwartz suggests that our economic founders, such as Adam Smith, helped construct our view of human nature. Smith made observations about the' invisible hand' and how humans pursue their self-interest in all situations (Smith, 1817). Schwartz argues that society has transitioned from self-fulfilling prophecies into de facto truths (Schwartz, 2015). Since agency theory is the dominant theory in governing today's corporations and is connected to a deficiency-based approach, it makes sense that the deficiency-based approach is the dominant one in the field today.

In the previous chapter, I also established that stewardship theory represents an alternative view to agency theory, focused on collaborative and participatory approaches to governance. Stewardship views agent and principal interests as complementary, and

divergence does not necessarily result in adverse outcomes. Instead, they potentially lead to change through innovation and collaboration (Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Schillemans, 2013; Hernandez, 2012; Davis et al., 1997; Van Puyvelde et al., 2012). Many researchers and practitioners turn to the benefits of asset-based approaches to engage in collective, participatory forms of addressing issues (Hopkins and Rippon, 2015; Phillips and Pittman, 2014; Coghlan, A.T., Preskill, H. and Tzavaras Catsambas, T., 2003; Browning, 2014; Bushe, 2011; Trajkovski, S., Schmeid, V., Vickers, M. H. and Jackson, D., 2016; Grieten, S., Lambrechts, F., Bouwen, R., Huybrechts, J., Fry, R., Cooperrider, D., 2018; Mataira et al., 2014; Cooperrider and Fry, 2020). In the literature review, I outlined the literature, theories, models, and frameworks related to non-profit board governance in my organization. In the next sections, I outline the philosophy, approaches, perspectives, methods, data collection, voices, and analysis methods for my workplace project. I also examine the various modes of Action research and justify an assets-based approach to my workplace problem.

3.2 Philosophy

Positivism is primarily concerned with first-order change while removing the human element from the equation. It relies heavily on empirical evidence to back claims and does not account for innovation or emergence (Coghlan, 2019; Stacey, 2011). Given my intention is to include the voices and themes that emerge, it appears that positivism would not be particularly suitable for my project. Realism advocates for an objective reality that exists regardless of the human element, again discounting the emergence of new forms specific to the studied subjects. Also unsuitable, on the opposite end of the spectrum, nominalism espouses no shared reality (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). These positions fail to account for the emergent processes inherent in my research project. Therefore, in searching for a philosophical position that makes sense for my project, I am drawn toward a Relativistic ontological and a social constructionist epistemological perspective.

The workplace problem I have selected deals with multiple stakeholder subjects' perspectives and the identities, roles, and leadership experiences that influence those perspectives. Therefore, subjective views can collaborate to generate results. From a subjective context, I can place my project within a relativistic ontology where the studied

reality is relative to the subjects (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). The generation of learning from those subjects refers to a constructivist epistemology (Peschl, 2007).

In Appreciative Inquiry, Cooperrider (1987) focuses on the generative theoretical aspects of behavioural and social sciences and adhere to the belief that it can provoke debate, stimulate normative dialogue, and furnish conceptual alternatives needed for social transformation. They argue that traditional organizations base problem-solving methods on a problem-solving paradigm, and first-order organizational incremental change is prioritized over second-order transformative paradigmatic change, limiting the organization's generative capacity. Their perspective aligns with my own that knowledge is generated by the participants and learning occurs through interaction, and the organization is an artefact constructed by the members. Debate and dialogue among participants generating learning refer to a constructivist epistemology. Cooperrider and Avital (2004) argue for constructivist and constructionist epistemologies, both in constructing artefacts and generating knowledge from interactions within a relativistic ontology for Appreciative Inquiry (AI). Therefore, I find that my ontological and epistemological perspectives align with AI.

3.3 Methodology

Action research is my chosen methodology because it best models a participatory research project where I am fully immersed and accounts for the cycles of action, planning, and evaluation (Coghlan, 2019). The multiple stages in each cycle provide a structure from which to examine each phase of the work. Within Action research, there are multiple modes or methods from which to choose. First, it helps understand the modes of knowledge production before getting into specifics of the project. Anderson et al. (2015), in distinguishing modes refer to 3 separate modes of knowledge production:

Mode 1 - University-based as pure, disciplinary, and action-driven

Mode 2 – Practice-based, active, applied, transdisciplinary, and problem-focused

Mode 3 – "knowledge production, generally stated, is to assure the survival and promote the common good, at various levels of social aggregation" (Huff and Huff, 2001, p.53).

My research is primarily concerned with mode three knowledge production through projects initiated to benefit humanity. Mode 3 steps beyond problem-solving through practical problems and applied theory to produce a profit, beneficial to more than just the stakeholders who have invested resources. According to Anderson et al. (2015), there are several descriptors to differentiate the different modes by activity triggers, participants, goals, methods, activity site, time horizon, boundaries, beneficiaries, quality control, funding (primary source), and dissemination. By outlining the different descriptors for the different modes of action research, Anderson et al. (2015) provide a way of understanding what mode the researcher chooses. Mode 3 applies to my research for multiple reasons.

First, the activity trigger is a complex problem involving systems and processes where appreciation for the unique relational capital and services, and critique of current practices, are required for resolution. Therefore, an isolated problem can be analysed rather than addressed as it happens. Second, the participants are diverse stakeholders with unique interests and perspectives on the problem. Third, they move in and out of the research based on which activities or processes we are examining, seeking truth, and finding solutions to improve the organization's goals to accomplish future good. Fourth, methods utilizing collective experience and conversation to explore the problem are at the core of my research. Fifth, the activity site of the problem involves the community and potentially societal issues as well. Sixth, the time horizon has both immediate and long-term implications requiring an examination at multiple levels. Seventh, the research requires crossing boundaries from the academic to the practical and emergent. The eighth criteria, beneficiaries, is addressed since the impacted group is society at large. The ninth criteria, quality control, is characterized by community agreement in Mode 3, and the problem includes representation of the community through the participants. The tenth criteria, funding source, is philanthropy and satisfies Mode 3. Finally, dissemination of the findings will be utilized locally but may have global implications if applied to the United Way Worldwide. Since the research problem fits all the Mode 3 criteria, I use it to design the research methods to stay in Mode 3 and provide parameters for the research.

In addition to operating in different modes, various models are used to visualize action research cycles. For example, McNiff and Whitehead (2000, p.205) refer to the

action research spiral, demonstrating the “interconnectedness of people, interpersonal and intrapersonal processes, where the same pattern of holistic connectedness integrates practice at a personal-social level”. Coghlan (2019) also refer to action research in cycles and go further into defining the stages of Action Research (Figure 6).

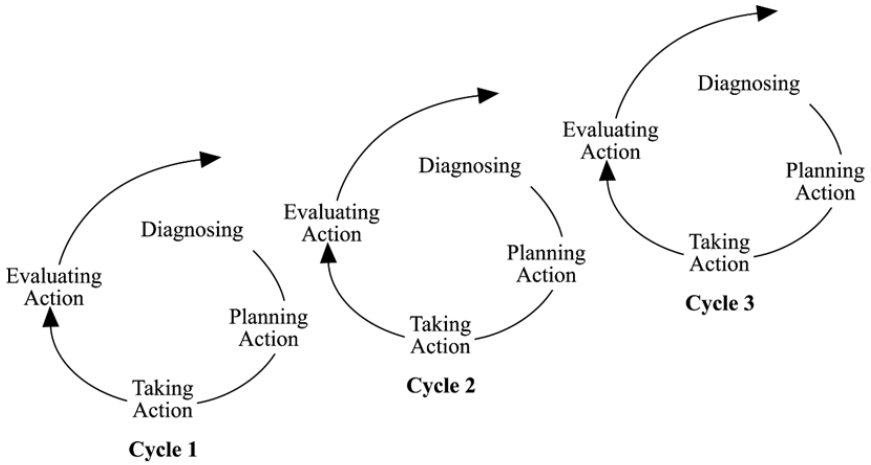


Figure 6- Action Research Cycles

Using cycles defined by specific actions gives context and purpose in the pre-step, as Coghlan and Brannick suggest and help provide context throughout the research. I use observations collected through interviews, journaling, meetings, and archival documents to diagnose in one cycle and then evaluate in the next cycle while informing planning and taking action in between. A cyclical approach also lends itself to various Action research Modes, such as Appreciative Inquiry (Anderson et al., 2015), where I use staged interactions to accomplish specific steps as cycles in the process.

Greenwood and Levin (2006) outline three cases in which Action research had noticeable and measurable results in the form of case studies. The results were significantly different between the three cases: a small local community, a large agribusiness corporation, and the last in a university setting. The common thread between the cases was developing the relationships between participants/researchers and the community of stakeholders the projects affected. Within the project, the lines blurred with researchers and community members to produce knowledge by interacting in action cycles. An essential point in Greenwood and Levin (2006) examination of the three case

studies is whether the organization achieves the desired outcome or not is only one measure of success in Action research. Knowledge production from the process can still produce vibrant and vital information about how the organization works. Essentially, Action research (AR) represents a cyclical process that generates actionable knowledge and provides reflexive cycles for the subjects involved. AR also operates under a relativistic ontology which is in line with my ontological perspective.

3.4 Mode: Appreciative Inquiry

When considering the Action research mode, I leaned heavily on the eight action modes described by Anderson et al. (2015). Of the multiple modes, three stood out for their focus on participation, community, integration of various parties, and focus on the organisation's existing assets. Developmental Action Inquiry (DAI) is a construct for incorporating the first-person subjective, second-person intersubjective, and third-person objective perspectives using four territories: intuitive vision, rational strategy, artistic performance concrete outcomes. The DAI structure allows for collecting data from multiple perspectives without identifying the pre-existing conditions of culture or context. Applications for this mode have included research such as Dzubinski, L., Hentz, B., Davis, K.L., Nicolaides, A. (2012) applying DAI to adult education facilitators to avoid the linear pathways that lead to predetermined conclusions, seeking to let the answers emerge from their study. While effective, DAI does not account for where the organization is in its current state. The Corona Norco United Way has operated in a deficit-focused mode for many years with little growth and regression. Participatory Action research (PAR) focuses on community development (Anderson et al., 2015), a democratic and non-coercive process where all participants are involved in examining and deciding upon action. Multiple iterative cycles of action contribute to learning within PAR. However, there is little in the structure of how to accomplish those cycles defined within PAR itself Guy, B., Feldman, T., Cain, C., Leesman, L. and Hood, C., 2020). PAR remains too unstructured for the context of my workplace project. In contrast, AI starts in an appreciative-focused state seeking to capitalize on the strengths of the organization. Ultimately, AI emerged as the best fit for the organization, as I explain and justify next.

Appreciative Inquiry seeks to close the practice-theory gap by moving past a traditional problem-solving model to an appreciative approach and building

improvisational capability (Grieten et al., 2018; Ludema, J.D., Cooperrider, D.L. and Barrett, F.J., 2006; Cooperrider, 1987; Cooperrider, D.L., Zandee, D.P., Goodwin, L., Avital, M., Boland, R.J., 2013). According to Fitzgerald, S.P., Murrell, K.L. and Miller, M.G. (2003, 1–2), there are five Appreciative Inquiry principles: constructionist, simultaneity, poetic, anticipatory, and positive. The constructionist principle is concerned with analyzing organizations as human constructions. The principle of simultaneity posits that Inquiry and change are occurring simultaneously. The poetic principle involves co-authoring the 'story' with learning, interpretation, and inspiration for themes. The anticipatory principle concerns the guidance of actions and behaviours based on reactions to current and anticipated future states. Finally, the positive principle involves hope, caring, spirit de corps, purpose, and joy. Fitzgerald et al. (2003) argue that Social Constructionism underpins three of the five principles (constructionist, simultaneity, and poetic) and provides the backdrop to account for the construction of realties while allowing for the collective negotiation of language and meaning that leads to those realities (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012).

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is the work of multiple doctoral candidates in the Organisational Behaviour Department at Case Western University in Cleveland, Ohio (Boje, D.M., Burnes, B. and Hassard, J., 2011). The original work was written in 1987 by Cooperrider (1987) and advocated for diagnosis as a step in organizational change (Boje et al., 2011). Appreciative Inquiry primarily focuses on leveraging the strengths of an organization to achieve change. AI represents a way to address many of the issues that have emerged. Firstly, a deficit-based approach has been used for years and has proven ineffective. Traditionally, organizations have used deficit-based approaches to problem-solving, casting problems as negative or deficient conditions, frequently called gaps or exceptions, that need to be filled or eliminated (Ngomane, 2011). According to Ludema et al. (2006), a deficit-based approach can lead participants to feel as if their organizations were full of problems and needs, precluding solutions or the motivation to do the work that could obtain or attain them. They argue that there must be ongoing work against the dominance of the deficit-based paradigm. They also advocate for Appreciative Inquiry as a strength or asset-based approach. Appreciative Inquiry can then create "enough uncertainty about the dominance of deficit vocabularies to allow organizational members

to consider new possibilities." (Ludema et al. 2006, p.157). Turnover is high, interactions among the members have become stalled in discussing the problems we face rather than the assets we have, and the results are poor with shrinking revenues. Also, conversion to a program-based operation has revealed the potential for sustainable competitive advantage in the form of inimitable services such as domestic violence counselling. Therefore, strengths or asset-based approaches would focus on what we currently have. Second, patterns of action are repetitive and lack a design for future progress and growth. AI provides a framework that results in design and destiny for the organization. Third, an internal focus is pervasive, failing to consider the external factors and processes needed to grow the organization and its impact on the community. AI encourages the inclusion of participants that brings external interests and perspectives into the decision-making. Finally, we spend most of the mindshare on role clarity in meetings and interactions. AI includes all participants and can be structured to surface issues of role clarity through dreaming what is possible and aligning on vision. Then participants can design their roles in the organization.

Appreciative Inquiry has received several critiques over the years. The most general critique is that the mode fails to bridge the practice-theory gap qualitatively, potentially leaving out important narratives by focusing only on positive aspects (Bushe, 2011; Fitzgerald, S.P., Oliver, C. and Hoxsey, J.C., 2010; Fitzgerald et al., 2003). The argument is that the process can paint a picture that only brings out what the participants are looking for, rather than seeing the picture as balanced between positive and negative outlooks, a zero-sum game based in a positivist paradigm (Stohl and Cheney, 2001; Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Torbert 2013; Cassell and Symon, 2004). However, according to Cooperrider, the picture of a whole as being a net of positives and negatives is a false dichotomy (Bushe, 2011; Cooperrider and Fry, 2020). AI's idea is to transcend the polarity of positive and negative (Cooperrider and Fry, 2020). The argument uses a deficit approach by assuming that there must be negative to the positive potentially stemming from an overreliance on mathematics and balanced equations to human problems. Instead, a non-deficit approach to an organization requires breaking from the zero-sum positivist paradigm, where one score tells us if the result is positive or negative (Bushe, 2011).

There are multiple examples where organizations have used Appreciative Inquiry (AI) in case study formats. Collington and Fook (2016) conducted an AI study in higher education. They discovered that better preparation at the outset in addressing AI concerns and providing alternative methods for consideration would have helped mitigate resistance and facilitated sustained change. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Hospital and Health System Association of Pennsylvania, and the Corporation for Positive Change engaged in a 5-year project to increase nurse retention and patient care quality. They learned how staging the work with slow implementation initially reduced resistance (Cooperrider, D., Whitney, D.D. and Stavros, J., 2008). Over three years, the researchers used the AI initiative to create increased levels of comfort and trust over time, leading to faster results later (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p.295). These cases revealed that managing resistance at the outset of the project was related to progress. Therefore, preparation from the beginning was crucial to accepting my project, especially in addressing any concerns or resistance the participants may have to the project initially. I looked to justify and explain the choices of format and methodology during the informed consent phase through a series of meetings to reduce apprehension about the research, focus on the work and not the methods, and sustain change when the project ended.

Change management is one of the more challenging aspects of organizational behaviour, and sustained change can be elusive (Collington and Fook, 2016; Cooperrider et al., 2008). Boulder County's Aging Services Division launched the Greeting Our Future campaign to anticipate an influx of retirees called the 'Silver Tsunami'. They discovered that a well-built infrastructure allowed them to take on the new patients' dual roles' challenges as needing services and volunteers concurrently. The problem tended to take on a 'life of its own' and entered sustainment (Cooperrider et al. 2008, p.308). BP Castrol Marine engaged in Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to turn around their flagging business. In the process, they discovered that AI exposed a need for paradigmatic change to a positive strengths/asset-based way of thinking to sustain changes beyond the project (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p.281). Alice Peck Day Health Systems in New Hampshire learned that Healthcare has an inherent deficit focused industry and could leverage AI as a powerful agent to initiate change from a deficit focused approach to an appreciative focused approach (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p.298). All these cases point to the need for

cultural change with infrastructure supporting the process. Therefore, my AI project needed to include a plan for after-action sustainment and the foundation and cultural context to nurture the change process. Incorporating these lessons into the design of my methods was crucial. In the following sections, I outline how I accomplished this.

3.5 Methods

Using Appreciative Inquiry for my project included examining processes such as meetings, reporting structure, and command chain. It also included designing systems such as hierarchy, communication (internal and external), and board structure. I used a four-seminar approach to Appreciative Inquiry with semi-structured interviews and personal journaling from each of the other participants during the process. Using the fiscal calendar (July to June) combined with a monthly meeting cycle, I conducted one meeting for each phase over two years. Before, after, and in-between these primary meeting cycles, reflection on first-person data collection involved personal journaling using Schein's Intervention Typology (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). Second-person data was collected through Semi-structured interviews during each phase using pure, diagnostic, and confrontative inquiry methods, as indicated in Schein's Dynamics of Helping (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). Each of the meetings, informal or otherwise, produced minutes, records, and notes, that provide third-person perspective data to compare with the first and second-person data giving a comprehensive picture of the process. Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider, 1987) involves iterations of a four-part cycle: Discovery, Dreaming, Designing, and Destiny (Anderson et al., 2015). Next, I explain the timeline of events and how I used visual mapping and temporal bracketing to illustrate the project.

3.6 Appreciative Inquiry timeline

Figure 7 represents the timeline structure of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process I followed. The four phases happened sequentially, and all but the final phase took ninety days to complete because of COVID-19. The final phase, Destiny, took approximately six months. Data collection of archival documents occurred through standard cyclical meeting practices such as our minutes and agendas from the regular monthly board meetings. Within each of the four phases Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny, I

gathered personal journals before and after formal and informal meetings and conducted interviews within breakout sessions for each formal phase. In the following section, I describe in more detail our actions and how the data collection occurred in relation to the phases and how they occurred over the length of the project (Figure 7). In later chapters, I address each phase separately and discuss the raw data gathered from the interactions, the events and provide analysis within the context of the literature. In the following sections, I cover the structure of each of these phases in detail. First, I cover an overview of how the four phases were conducted.

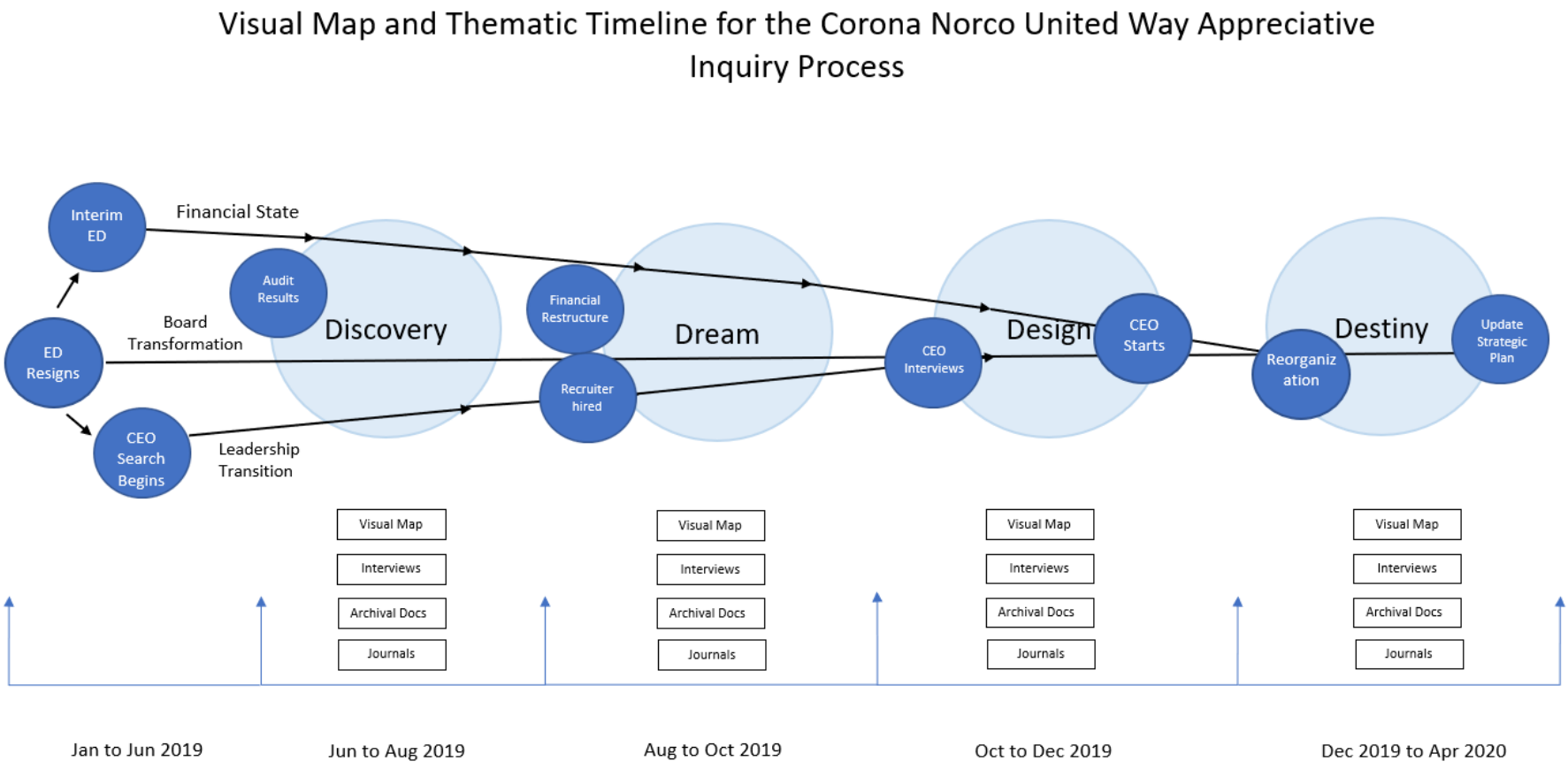


Figure 7- Visual Map and Thematic Timeline for the Corona Norco United Way Appreciative Inquiry Process

3.7 Discovery

The first of the four phases of the Appreciative Inquiry 4D cycle is Discovery. In the Discovery phase, we identified what assets and strengths the Corona Norco United Way already possesses from the organization's perspective. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010) refer to eight different Appreciative Inquiry (AI) forms ranging from thousands of interviews and millions of data points to small groups where more intense and detailed interactions occur.

The form I chose for this research project is the Core Group Inquiry (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom 2010, p.38), based on the group's small size and is used primarily for quick start-ups, turnarounds, and establishing a base of enthusiasm for a more considerable effort. Block (2011) advocates for a technique called 'Getting the Picture' using a 14-step process to apply a positive strengths-based approach to moving from Discovery to Destiny. Block provides several useful points for how to walk through the project we are attempting. The following represents the pre-work and agenda that I created for our Discovery Meeting based on the work of Block (2011), Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010), and (Cooperrider et al., 2008). The idea was to further the member's understanding of a strengths-based approach and Appreciative Inquiry. First, I sent all members the pre-work:

- Pre-work
  - Pre-read: Flawless Consulting Chapter 11 excerpt - The Whole System Process pp. 180-182 (Block, 2011, pp.180–182)
  - Pre-read: Flawless Consulting Chapter 12 Discovering Gifts, Capacities, and Possibilities pp. 183 – 199 (Block, 2011, 183–199)

I delivered the excerpts in a pdf format before the discovery session so the participants could read through the concepts of strengths-based approaches and the process of Appreciative Inquiry ahead of time. Pre-work also included reviewing archival documents such as minutes from past meetings and the planning day summary from our last strategic planning session in 2015 (see Appendix K). Finally, I kept personal journals before and after events when possible using Schein's ORJI format (Coghlan, 2019). We started the session with introductions and questions about the meeting's purpose. We had two breakout sessions where semi-structured interviews were conducted in pairs and

two central meetings as a group where we shared the interview results. The outcome of the meeting was a visual map that outlines the current state of the Corona Norco United Way by looking at the assets, relationships, internal and external processes, and goals of the organization. I discuss the details of the map, how it was created, and the reactions of the participants in the Discovery chapter.

3.8 Dream – What Might it Be?

The Dream phase involved using the visual map outcome from the Discovery phase to guide the semi-structured interviews between board members and staff. Other data includes notes before and after events in personal journals using Schein's ORJI format (Coghlan, 2019). Additionally, there were archival documents associated with the time leading up to and during the Dream phase. Archival documents included minutes from meetings from regular board meetings. The participants selected the pairs with basic instructions on selecting interview partners they had not interacted with in previous steps. I provided semi-structured interview forms, and the pairs had thirty minutes to conduct their interviews and record their notes anonymously. After the interview session, we came back together to share the main themes to collect the information. We held the session for one hour during a regular board meeting to complete the interviews and share them back. I received the interview forms after the session for further analysis and security. I discuss the interactions that occurred during the Dream meeting in the Dream chapter.

3.9 Design – What Can it Be?

There are four steps to the Design stage, according to (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p.163): select design elements, identify internal and external elements, identify themes and engage in dialogue, write provocative propositions. We took themes from the Discovery and Dream stages to ask questions designed to generate insight and specific, actionable items from the themes in selecting design elements. Identifying internal and external relationships involved dialogue in understanding "what relationships have been built to establish a positive core" (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p.165). The third step involved identifying themes and engaging in dialogue. I used the visual map from the Discovery phase to identify which themes were the most important to the participants and use them as the starting point for dialogue. We also used archival documents such as minutes from

formal regular board meetings and the existing strategic plan to inform our process. The dialogue included using storytelling to refine further and define themes for the next step. The final step was writing provocative propositions from the themes generated by dialogue in the previous step. Lastly, I captured notes in personal journals in Schein's ORJI format to understand better how I impacted the research and how the research impacted me. I discuss the events and interactions that occurred during this phase in the Design chapter.

3.10 Destiny – What Will it Be?

There are two primary goals in the Destiny phase, according to (Cooperrider et al. 2008, p.200):

> 1) "Aligning the actual organization with the provocative propositions created in the Design phase."
>
> 2) "Building AI learning competencies into the culture."

The intention of implementing AI is to establish appreciative learning cultures and improvisational capacity to change how the organization makes decisions (Cooperrider et al., 2008). While there is no best way to implement the Destiny stage, our approach is to embed the themes and actions from the design phase into the strategic planning process to generate a 3-year strategic plan. Having covered the process of AI and methods for data collection from archival documents, personal journals and captured the events themselves, I turn to address a central criticism of qualitative research and Appreciative Inquiry, bridging the theory-practice gap.

3.11 Bridging the Theory-Practice gap

A critical consideration in an Action research project is bridging the theory-practice gap (Tenkasi and Hay, 2004; Coghlan, 2011; Coghlan, 2011; Rigg and Trehan, 2004; Cornforth, 2002; Cook and Elwell, 2014). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the failure to bridge the gap is also a critique of Appreciative Inquiry (AI). Tenkasi and Hay (2004) proposed one solution to use a framework based on activity theory. Activity theory uses concepts proposed by Vygotsky (1962). The concept uses the premise that the field of psychology needed to transcend two opposing concepts of the time. Human

consciousness programs at the time defined mentalistic phenomena as separate from the material world (theory) and, simultaneously, behaviouristic programs viewed behaviour manifested in action (practice) as the most crucial element (Tenkasi and Hay, 2004; Kerosuo and Engeström, 2003).

Vygotsky developed his concept based on the inseparability of unity between consciousness and activity (Tenkasi and Hay, 2004; Vygotsky, 1962; Vygotsky, 1930). Over the next several years, the concept became what we now know as activity theory (Tenkasi and Hay, 2004). Tenkasi and Hay propose a framework based on activity theory for creating theory-practice linkages through stages of utilizing knowledge of the practitioner and the participants to create an aligned understanding of the work at hand (Figure 8). The three mediators of the model are project definition, project execution, and project realization. This model fits nicely with the Appreciative Inquiry Four-D model and further explains and justifies using the phases in two different ways. The Project Definition phase consists of initiation and framing streams. In my workplace problem, the issues came first and then I selected them for the project. I rely more on the initiation stream because of the practice mediated actions involved in the project. However, the framing stream is critical for understanding the application of my methods. The next three streams are loosely like the Discovery, Dream, and Design phases and constitute the model's Project Execution section. Multiple cycles of action, application of theories, data gathering, and analysis are characteristic of this section, with sensemaking and synthesis being part of the final stage.

There is a noticeable shift in analysis and narrative style between Design and Destiny, which is reflected in the transition between chapters 5 and 6 in this paper. The shift is primarily due to the participants transitioning from conceptual to practical application in putting our work into practice, exactly the bridging that Tenkasi and Hay aimed to structure and that critics have cited as elusive and hard to define. Therefore, between the design and destiny stage, I intend to enter all of the data from the previous phases into Nvivo 12 (version 12.6.0.959 released 2019) to produce data in the form of thematic coding to abductively analyse the data (Gioia, D.A., Corley, K.G. and Hamilton, A.L., 2012). I further justify and explain the thematic coding in section 3.14.

Since there is some redundancy in the framework when considering the Literature Review and Methodology chapters of this thesis, I used the framework to fill any gaps in relating the outcomes. The use of outcomes provided structure to the results that could then be generalized, having a basis in a framework outside of AI with a record of rigour and relevance on its own. Since critics of AI claim the method lacks this area, it makes sense to have a structured framework that can effectively bridge this gap. Having defined the AI approach's methods and methods for bridging the practice-theory gap, I now turn to ethical considerations.

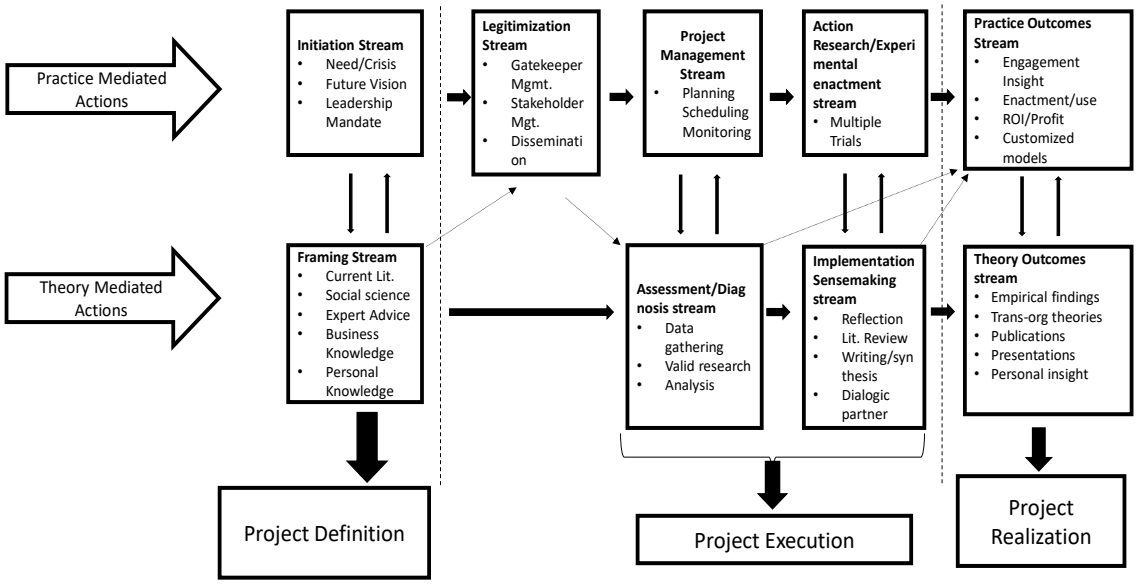


Figure 8 - Theory and practice mediators of successful organization project

3.12 Ethical Consideration

This study's participants are the staff, Interim Executive Director, and Board of directors for the Corona Norco United Way. The participants were given a complete description of the research in written form and seven days to consider participation. The participants then delivered their signed informed consent forms to the Office Manager. The Office Manager secured the information in a locked file cabinet in a sealed envelope. All documents, except for my private journals, are public records. I included no minors or other vulnerable groups in this data or the research cycles.

My role as the President of the Board of directors for two terms may represent a bias towards outcomes. I needed to account for my dual role of participant and researcher accordingly. I realized that my influence would potentially be affected by the positional authority; therefore, I regularly acknowledged it in meetings and discussed it openly. Within the research analysis, I needed to account for it as additional data. To accomplish this, I kept personal journals using Schein's Observation, Reaction, Judgment, Intervention (ORJI) typology (Coghlan, 2019) to account for how this affected the project. I then incorporated these thoughts into the discussion of data and the thematic analysis.

Ethical challenges to work around included a bilingual environment. One of the participants spoke Spanish only; however, I was able to partner with another participant who was willing to translate all our conversations in breakouts, interviews, and groups. There was some potential for loss of translation; however, there were other Spanish speakers who worked to ensure that the messages were properly translated both ways. The nonverbals from the Spanish-speaking participant indicated a positive experience with the translation. In the next section, I describe in detail what data I collected and how I collected it.

3.13 Data Collection

Three separate processes were co-occurring through the research period the financial state, board formation, and leadership transition. Simultaneously, I facilitated the Appreciative Inquiry seminars. From the day-to-day operations of the Corona Norco United Way, I used archival documents from board meetings leading up to the research period of September 2019 through February 2020. The materials included meeting agendas, minutes, financial, and supplemental reports. I collected job descriptions, interview questions and notes, and special meeting transcriptions from the transition to a new CEO. Finally, I collected interviews, transcriptions of special meetings, board meeting archival documents, and transcriptions from the seminars themselves from the Appreciative Inquiry seminar.

Data collection during the research project consisted of several elements:

- Personal Journals – First person

- Interview Documents – Second person
- Archival Documents - Third person

I recorded personal journals to gain a first-person perspective on the events to monitor the researcher-participant role using Schein's ORJI Model (Coghlan, 2019, p.34) before and after phases and significant events. I also asked the participants to journal as they see fit to capture their thoughts between sessions or meetings to collect them and include them in the data anonymously. I based the semi-structured interviews on examples of interview guides found in *The Appreciative Inquiry Handbook* by (Coghlan, 2019). I also used Schein's dynamics of helping (Coghlan, 2019) as another guide to include questions that moved from pure inquiry to diagnostic inquiry and finally confrontive inquiry. I then used questions designed as pure inquiry to elicit stories and listen carefully and neutrally to the answers.

Examples are, "How did you get started with the United Way?" or, "Tell me a little about yourself". Next, I designed questions using diagnostic inquiry to explore emotional reasoning and actions. Examples included "How did you feel about that?" or "How did you react?". Finally, I used confrontive inquiry to challenge the other party by sharing ideas and encouraging thinking from a new perspective. Examples include "I remember that event. Here is how I interpreted it what do you think?" or "That turned out very well! Why do you think they did that?" (See Appendix C). Interview documents were generated from the AI cycle in the Discovery and Dream phases to gain a second-person perspective from the events and recordings for transcription late. I broke out pairs of participants in the Discovery and Dream phases to use the semi-structured interview guides and then share their findings with the larger group. Through this method, we converged on themes. Archival documents from the Corona Norco United Way are public by nature and may be requested for review by any community member. These documents include email communication, minutes and financial reports from monthly meetings, structural documents such as bylaws, handbooks, and strategic planning documents.

3.14 Data Analysis

I employed four data analysis methods: thematic analysis, visual mapping, process mapping, and temporal bracketing. In the following sections, I explain and justify how I

applied the multiple analysis methods and examined how they relate to the research objectives and questions. I cover the usage of each of these methods in general research and the context of Appreciative Inquiry (AI). I also discuss how these methods help clarify the tensions board members face in navigating internal and external processes, central and collective leadership, and conformance or performance roles.

Thematic analysis in my project consisted of entering and transcribing relevant archival, interview, and journal documents into the Nvivo 12 data analysis software. I employed the structure proposed in Gioia et al. (2012, p.21), using first and second-order theme convergence to lead to aggregate dimensions. I then placed the aggregate dimensions within the thematic model of themes and tensions. I used abductive thematic analysis by coding blocks of conversation from transcriptions of recorded Appreciative Inquiry seminars, meeting minutes, personal journals, and semi-formal interviews. Abductive analysis allows the author's voice from archival documents. It reflects why specific codes or themes may not fit within the frameworks and theories developed (Saldana, 2009), potentially giving a deeper and more accurate view of what happened in a very subjective research scenario. Abductive thematic analysis is also an effective way to bridge the theory-practice gap within an AI context to achieve collaborative research and discover themes in practice (Lundgren and Jansson, 2016).

I used the REV.com (version 2.11 released 2018) app to record and transcribe phase sessions. I uploaded all the primary phase transcripts from recordings in Nvivo 12 and coded the passages, phrases, and words from the documents into nodes and subsets of nodes. I coded the data by examining the raw data in transcripts and documents to look for emerging themes in the first coding round. Then I compared the first-order terms, such as “needs of the community”, “brand awareness”, “reputation awareness”, and “organizations as stakeholders” (Gioia et al., 2012), to the thematic model I developed in the literature review using an abductive approach. I found that the themes we originally identified in the early phases led to more generalized concerns that fell under similar categories. Next, I conducted a second round of coding to further distil the themes into working categories of second-order themes such as “Role Clarity”, “Values”, and “Culture” (Gioia et al., 2012). The second-order themes did seem to fit within the themes from the

thematic model identified in the literature review. Lastly, I further distilled the themes into aggregate themes such as “Internal and External Processes”, “Mission and Values”, “Brand”, and “Community” (Gioia et al., 2012). From that understanding, I validated or invalidated the thematic model's tensions and brought themes to the destiny stage to complete the AI seminar cycle.

Understanding the themes was pivotal to the research, and the themes that emerged from the phases were slightly different from the thematic coding. Figure 9 is a table generated using Gioia’s structure and Nvivo 12 coding software (larger version in Appendix Q). They do not necessarily match up when compared to themes that emerged during the phases. The narrative strategy is the primary form of composition I used to help describe events' nuances as they occurred within the research project to expose the project's relevance to my research question (Langley, 1999). However, the narrative strategy weakness is that it does not connect data to processes as I would like to ensure rigour (Langley, 1999). Process Theory provides a way of capturing how events happened that ties together the data from thematic analysis and a narrative strategy (Mohr, 1982; Langley, 1999). The process was quite convoluted as I analysed the events that occurred, so I also incorporated the Model-Led Composition strategy combined with Visual Mapping (Berends and Deken, 2019) to give the reader a clue about what is coming and a way to understand the narrative. Lastly, I incorporated temporal bracketing (Langley, 1999) to provide a timeline of events and make sense of the space in which they occurred (Figure 7, p. 66).

Analysis from the literature review pointed to themes of leadership, roles, and processes in which tensions existed between centralized or collective leadership, internal or external processes, and conformance or performance roles. The tensions appeared tied to theoretical interpretations of the themes through the lenses of agency or stewardship. Over the next several sections, I discuss the results and data from each phase and the associated themes. I will also progressively display the visual map (Figure 7, p. 66) to track the timeline and themes from different events. Finally, I look at the

emergent themes abductively compared to the initial themes generated during the literature review and discuss the analysis results.

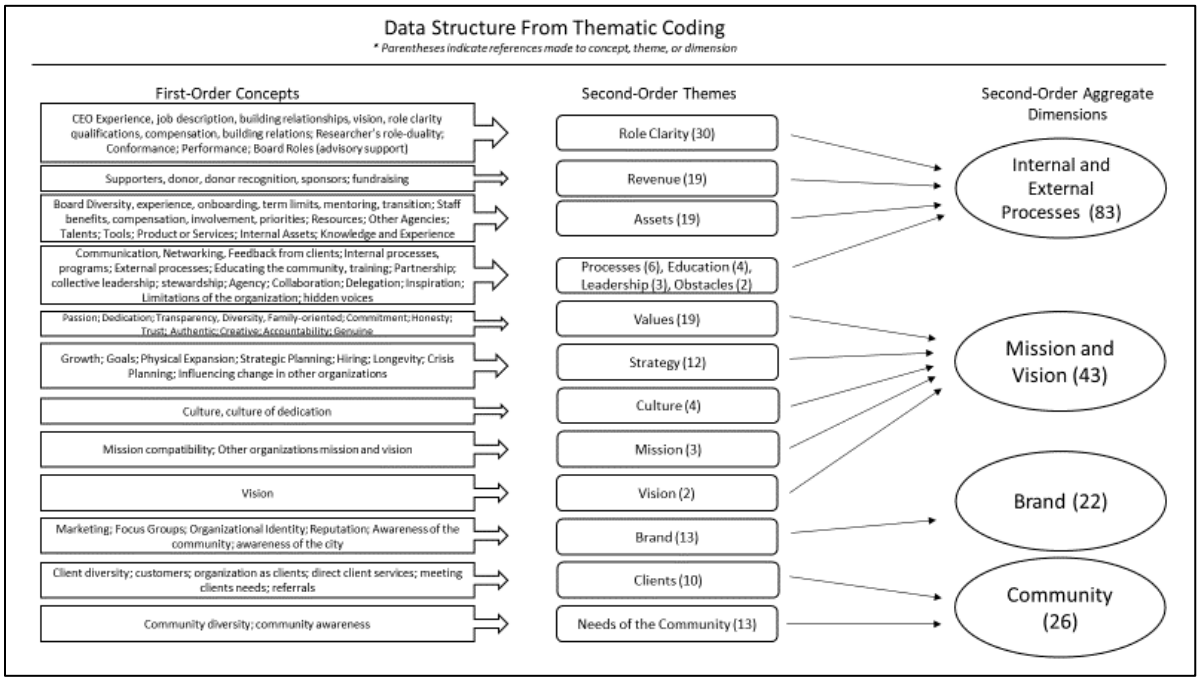


Figure 9- Data Structure from Thematic Coding (also see Appendix Q)

3.15 Conclusion

By establishing the context and literature for my project, this chapter is the next step in explaining and justifying the methodologies and methods of my research. The cyclical nature of the project and the relativistic ontological and constructionist epistemology are well-suited to Action research. Within Action research, Mode 3 knowledge production provides the most conducive environment for the dynamic operations of the Corona Norco United Way and the participative approach I am trying to achieve. To accomplish a holistic approach to participation by all organization members, I have researched and found that Appreciative Inquiry is the best fit from a philosophical and practical perspective. Appreciative Inquiry, like all qualitative research, requires a high standard for rigour and relevance. To further establish this, I will employ activity theory to bridge the theory-practice gap, process theory to provide structure to the process through visual mapping, narrative strategies, and thematic coding of archival data and interviews collected throughout the project. Through this multi-theoretical approach and the application of

tested frameworks, I have constructed the methodology and methods that will support the four-phase whole systems Appreciative Inquiry mode of Action research. In the next chapters, I will cover the phases of Appreciative Inquiry in detail. First, we begin with the Discovery phase.

4 Discovery – Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The Discovery phase of AI involves the participants understanding the assets and strengths the organization already possesses. Ludema et al. (2006, p.157) sum it up best by defining the purpose of the phase as “to search for, highlight, and illuminate those factors that give life to the organization, the “best of what is” in any given situation”. Our Discovery meeting came at a time of great change and trepidation at the CNUW as we navigated multiple critical events. The Executive director of twenty-two years had resigned, and we discovered serious discrepancies in accounting records. We realized our assets and reserves were significantly lower than reported because of the accounting issues. The context was complicated, and external feedback on how leadership was running the operation was concerning and plentiful.

To deal with the crisis, our board of directors employed agency-based behaviours of conformance roles to oversee operations, centralized leadership to consolidate power and decision-making in the board, and a focus on internal processes. We also sought guidance from the United Way Worldwide and GAAP to conform with current versions of governance and regulations. It was abundantly clear that the survival of the CNUW was at stake and that we had to consider alternative forms for our organization should we be unable to come up with the resources we needed. What options to choose and how to achieve them was the bulk of what we sought to resolve in the Discovery phase. First, however, it would be helpful to understand the context of our operational state as we embarked on the four phases of Appreciative Inquiry

4.2 Emerging Context

In reviewing the archival documents such as minutes and from my personal journals, three tracks represented the highest priority challenges for the CNUW (Figure 10):

- Leadership Transition - Replacing the Executive director and identifying a transitional leadership plan in the absence of an Executive Succession Plan

- Financial State - Inaccurate financial records that overstated financial assets compounded by operational problems of communication, accountability, and transparency.
- Board Transformation - Transforming the way the board interacts with the organization and each other.

There was a great deal of overlap among the three issues. However, they all seemed to stem from the lack of solid leadership from the Executive Director. Therefore, the leadership transition would be our highest priority. The difficulty in navigating the leadership transition increased because the financial records showed an inaccurate picture of our financial assets. We were unsure exactly how much money we had to hire a new CEO/Executive director or even what we needed in that role. Finally, we were aware that oversight of the leadership and responsibility for the financial well-being was an integral part of the director's role. To address these issues and sustain a viable organization, we needed to transform the board to handle our new operational structure. The tensions became evident as we navigated these issues. In the following sections, I discuss each of these events to give context to the Appreciative Inquiry process and describe how tensions emerged.

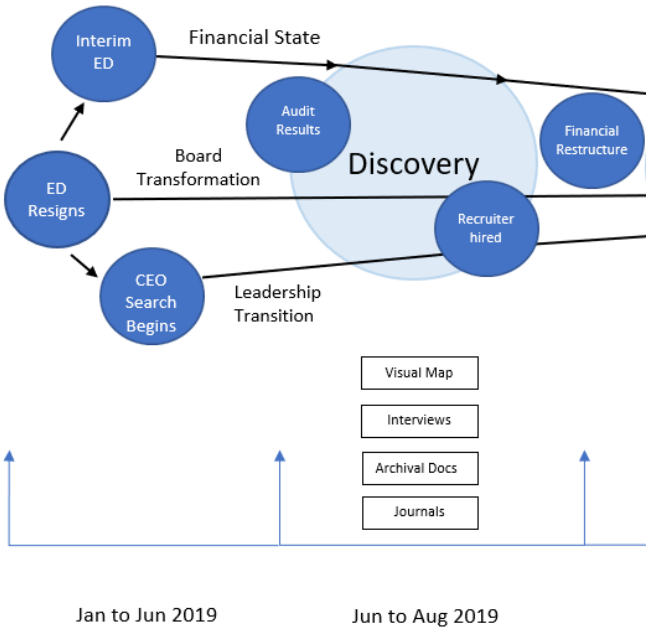


Figure 10- Visual Map and Thematic Timeline for the Corona Norco United Way Appreciative Inquiry Process

4.3 Leadership Transition

Before the ED resigned, a few critical events precipitated a state of crisis. During the last four months that the ED was in place, the board had expressed concern with the direction of the CNUW. Comments such as ‘Other organizations are growing and doing pretty well, but we seem to be shrinking’ and ‘we used to have a bigger presence in the community, but now not many people know who we are’ indicated that the board had noticed performance issues. Simultaneously, I had focused on meeting the standards of the UWW. One of the items was to develop an Executive Succession Plan. The plan required collaboration between the ED and the board of directors to ensure the succession of leadership sustaining the organization during any potential transitions. In my personal journals, I recorded feeling as if a change was on the horizon as the ED ‘despite knowing the requirements had not engaged the board to create an Executive Succession Plan’ and that the CNUW was ‘vulnerable to issues from a change in leadership that could put the communities we serve in danger’. The resignation of the ED had mixed results.

On the one hand, we were unprepared for a transition of only two weeks and unsure of what the next steps would be within such a short time frame. One board member expressed, ‘we have had the same ED for over 20 years, and we’ve done pretty well. What are we going to do now?’. On the other hand, another board member commented, ‘Yes, we have had the same leader for over twenty years, but we have also seen a decrease in revenues and awareness in the community. Maybe it is time for a change’. We were starting to recognize an opportunity to redefine the CNUW with a significant leadership change. I recorded in my personal journals a frustration with the resistance to the change when clearly there was change needed. I attributed much of the CNUW’s performance issues to a lack of capacity on the part of the ED. I recorded statements such as ‘I don’t think the ED can make the changes they need to make to lead the CNUW to a new future’. The different levels of readiness for change frustrated me and a couple of others, and it was clear from nonverbal and verbal cues that many directors were in a threat state. Comments included ‘what are we going to do now’ or ‘maybe we can reach out to the ED and see if they are willing to stay on during the transition’. The tension

evident in this exchange was between centralized and collective behaviours as each director took a slightly different attitude about what we should do and on the continuum between keeping the ED and moving on. We navigated our individual opinions slowly but surely. Eventually, we collectively agreed that it was better to move on and plan a transition to a new ED/CEO.

During this decision-making process, we realized we did not have a clear picture of what we wanted in an ED/CEO, and therefore we did not know who would be best for the Interim Executive director position. Combined with the prospect of having no buffer between the operations and responsibility of the CNUW and the board of directors, the members made comments such as ‘we are exposed to a lot of liability as we make direct decisions without another level of oversight’ and ‘I am uncertain about how this will turn out and where we are going.’ despite the strategic plan created two years earlier (see Appendix K). Still, I observed in my personal journals that ‘it’s difficult to differentiate whether the reaction is based on fear of an uncertain future or based on a critical evaluation of the ED’s resignation and the board’s role in it’. Acknowledging that the ED was allowed to exist in a substandard performance state-required accountability on the part of the directors because we had defaulted to conformance over performance roles in governing for most of our terms. I observed that we started changing from ‘conforming to what we had always done, to examining our expectations for the performance of the organization and therefore ourselves, and this change was exposing the tension between those two roles of the board.

Even the title of the role was contentious. The decision over Executive director versus CEO led to a charged discussion which brought into light the primary beliefs board members held about the role and the future of the CNUW. The ED’s title carried a history of compensation and job duties. A few board members thought that the ED’s title was sufficient and saw no reason to change. One Board member claimed that it “had been that way for 20 years” and that “they might have been able to make the changes needed in the current role given time”. It was clear that some board members had remorse over losing such a long-standing ED. Consistent with Higgins (2005) models of internal

processes, we did not align our internal processes for replacing the leader, resulting in confusion.

The trade-off was a choice between a known quantity of agency and stewardship. We faced an unknown need for future capability (e.g., the current Community Impact Manager) versus the risk of losing operational integrity because of a leadership vacuum. We needed continuity as we searched for a leader with unknown agency and stewardship perspectives but a significantly higher breadth of knowledge, experience, education, and growth capacity. Finally, there was a risk that a new leader would destabilize the current staff with unclear consequences. We had three possibilities to consider:

1) Promote our Community Impact Manager to Executive director after a trial run as the Interim Executive director and continue as we were, requiring a minimal investment of time and money.

2) Hire a new CEO with a new set of skills, experience, and capacity for growth, requiring significant time and money.

3) Merge with the larger United Way and become a branch office for their organization, sharing resources across a larger area, disbanding the board, and potentially reducing our staff.

We finally decided to make the existing community impact manager (CIM) the interim executive director (IED) in February of 2019. The familiar leadership and continuity with existing structures would give us more time. Having filled the void left by the departing ED, we turned to the task of determining which of the last two choices would best serve the community. Recognizing that we over-indexed on our internal talent processes, we expanded our perspective to include other organizations that had gone through similar scenarios.

The United Way in the adjacent service area had gone through a similar leadership change a couple of years before, and I was involved in meeting and working with the new CEO as they got started. They had successfully navigated the tension between conformance with traditional roles and existing structure and new territory to achieve

growth by employing a recruiter and defining what they wanted in a CEO. Becoming solvent and doubling their resources directly impacted the lives of the community they served, and they were able better to meet the goals of their mission and vision. The example of that United Way provided an important clue in the external and internal processes, collective leadership, and performance roles that we needed to transform our organization at all levels.

The neighbouring United Way proposed a merger as a solution to our financial and leadership woes. Having discussed the option with the board at the CNUW, it was clear that they considered a merge a last resort. The fear was that the city's service area's individuality would get lost in a larger United Way. Disbanding the board would mean dispersed control and no guarantee that funds from the community would make it back to the community. The board expressed fear of impacts on the community but also a sense of territorialism and pride. Some members had dedicated over twenty years and had a vested interest in seeing it through.

The complexity of the situation created tension in many areas. Firstly, the tension between taking over ourselves (centralized leadership) or aligning on strategies with all members of the organization (collective leadership) (Friedrich et al., 2009; Coule, 2015). Second, the tension between following the advice and direction of United Way Worldwide (conformance role) and hiring leadership that could meet our vision for growth and stability (performance role) (Chambers and Cornforth, 2010). Last, between maintaining or changing the way we operated (internal processes) and bringing in outside help such as consultants, recruiters, and new leadership (external processes) (Coghlan, 2019; Pablo, A.L., Reay, T., Dewald, J.R., Casebeer, A.L., 2007). We found ourselves stalemated with repeated conversations and not much forward motion on how to proceed.

To give us more information to make our decision, I believed an alternative view would facilitate clarifying or understanding what the CEO role could be. I invited the CEO from the neighbouring United Way to come and speak with our Board of directors, along with the Vice President from their board. The result was beyond my expectations. During our recap after the meeting, comments from our board included 'how do we get one of those?' or 'Wow, they are a notch above the rest. Where did they find them? Can we

afford a CEO like that?'. Overall, the sentiment was clear; they had a new perspective on what was possible in a CEO versus an Executive Director. Even after this series of events, members were still hesitant, citing how the CNUW had run for years without issues. One board member commented, 'Taking on the extra expense and work might be unnecessary, especially if we were going to merge at the end'. There was even residual sentiment that the old Executive Director' did not need to go'. We decided that we needed more time to decide on a permanent leader for the ED/CEO role. In discussing the IED position, we considered three options; make the CIM the IED, hire externally, or appoint a board member. First, we began to examine if we had the internal knowledge and infrastructure that would stabilize the CNUW in the short term and give us time to put a mid and long-term plan in place. If not, we would need outside processes such as recruiting or consulting to help us make the best decisions. Ultimately, we decided to put the existing CIM in place as the IED so that we had time to go through our AI process and refine our understanding of the ED/CEO role and how it would fit within our redesigned organization. Having decided how to handle the interim leadership, we next needed to contend with our financial state.

4.3.1 Financial State

The next major issue the board grappled with at the time was our financial state. During the most recent annual audit, the auditor found anomalies that needed correction in the current year. Correcting these anomalies altered the current assets of the CNUW significantly, and we found ourselves in an even more dire financial situation than we had anticipated. In possession of this knowledge, and through our Treasurer's hard work, it became clear that the financial reports were incorrect. Members expressed their concerns with comments 'can we afford this?' and 'why are we continuing to lose revenues year over year?'. Combined with revelations of relationships and post-employment activity by the former ED, the board reaffirmed that the resignation was appropriate, if not timely.

The revelation of our financial state was also a critical influencing factor for the board. Financial matters tended to be the areas we aligned on the most. While we had differing opinions on exactly how to handle the situation, we all had a clear understanding of how they worked and where we could act. After vigorous debate, the board voted to

unanimously move forward with hiring a CEO and growing our organization. The commitment to the investment of time and money would mean taking the CNUW to the brink of insolvency. Therefore, we decided to place a one-year time limit on putting our plan into action and agreed that we would merge after a year if we could not get our new plan to work. To address our financial state and make progress that year, we needed to examine and transform how the board of directors operated concerning the organization and our mission.

4.3.2 Board Transformation

The third major issue we faced was the transformation of the Board of directors. During this critical time, the tensions we experienced as a board mirrored the literature review findings, such as navigating the collective versus centralized tension within the leadership theme. Examples of this were the ongoing discussion of choosing between merging with a larger United Way, appointing the existing Community Impact Manager as the Interim ED, sourcing an outside Interim ED, or running the organization ourselves. Merging and appointing/sourcing interim leadership represents a blend of collective and centralized leadership. Running the organization from the board would represent a more centralized role, and it was clear from our discussions in board meetings that each board member had their own opinions on our best course of action. Some board members were direct in their centralized leadership behaviours with comments such as, ‘We could run it ourselves; I have done it for years.’ Others were more indirect but still advocated for centralized leadership with comments such as ‘We would save much money if we did not replace the Executive Director.’ These comments reflect revenue themes and seek to maintain the status quo even though we have established an organizational trend of declining revenues and acknowledged the need for change. Reflecting on this period in my personal journals, I noted that the board members tended towards the problem-solving they engage in their current or former occupations. Members acting as public officials tended towards systems and processes. In contrast, members with a primarily private enterprise background wanted to take charge and give staff direction. The different approaches the members used created tensions which I will discuss in more detail in the next section.

4.3.3 Emerging tensions

The decision on leadership during our transition brought new tensions to bear as we considered whether to handle the decision through internal or external processes. The tension between routine internal processes related to daily operations and external accountability to accounting guidelines and United Way programs confused the board of directors. Additionally, the staff was left in a state of disarray as they had not only lost their leader, but there were many interpersonal issues and a lack of role clarity. Comments from the staff included statements such as, “I do not know what I am supposed to be doing”, and “I do not know what my job is”. As we realized the full depth and scope of the problems we faced, our stance on the issues became centralized. The Board of directors focused on problems and how to fill in the gaps; everyone was in a state of caution, anxiety, and distrust. One board member declared in a board meeting, ‘We will need to step in and make sure things are running properly.”. We consolidated power into the board of directors and largely kept our own counsel on internally focused processes. We acutely felt the need to have a clear structure and direction in a short period to facilitate financial health. Concurrently, we wanted to bring the staff and interim leadership to prevent alienation or loss of key personnel. Especially because of the underdeveloped infrastructure, the staff had the institutional knowledge of daily operations. The internal process focus, and withdrawal from external processes, was compounded by the second tension between centralized and collective leadership.

A second tension became evident between centralized and collective leadership. Two levels appeared in this tension. The first level involved individuals within the board acting unilaterally to use influence or power rather than including the entire board in the decision-making process. One such example was a decision to approve donations to a school that one of the staff’s children attended. Afterwards, one of the board members questioned the decision, wondering ‘why we would approve such a donation?’. After the fact, the board members resolved the conflict. However, they framed the issue as a conflict rather than a collaboration. The board member decided centrally rather than collectively excluding others from the decision-making process, thereby creating a deficit-based problem resolution process. The second level of this tension involved excluding the organization’s staff and interim leadership in decision-making. In the example above,

the board had not been involved in the decision-making by one member. However, the decision-making process excluded the staff as well. The problem surfaced when one staff member asked, 'why can't I get funding for my child's school since the other staff member had received approval?'. Had the staff been part of a collective decision-making process engaging stewardship behaviours, these issues would likely have surfaced at the time rather than after the damage occurred. Engaging in agency-based behaviours and centralized leadership created a deficit-based problem for the staff and interim director.

Third, we chose to comply with existing structures and regulations, including our bylaws, over performance-focused behaviours. Instead of finding innovative ways to grow constantly and survive, we tended toward past actions and proven results. However, we were starting to recognize that what worked in the past would not work in the future. A prime example of this was the constant tension between running day-to-day operations and redefining the future of the CNUW as aboard. As a result, we constantly mired in issues that took mindshare and precious meeting resources to resolve. To clarify our roles and maintain a level of involvement conducive to crafting our vision for the future, we set up a liaison relationship with one board member to guide interactions between the board and the staff. With a clearer picture of our financial standing, a vision for our Board Transformation, and the Community Impact Manager in place as the Interim Executive Director, we were ready to assess the organization's assets and strengths and find a new CEO. We were ready for the Discovery phase of our Appreciative Inquiry journey.

4.4 Discovery Meeting Discussion

4.4.1 Context and Pre-work

In some cases, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) has met with resistance to the process from a lack of transparency and understanding of what the process entailed (Cooperrider et al. 2008). To compensate, I set out to prepare the participants with pre-work, in the form of reading excerpts, to provide time to understand the ground rules and underpinnings of the process. I designed the pre-work to introduce content such as strength or asset-based approaches before the Discovery meeting. The pre-work was an email sent the weekend before the Discovery meeting, including the agenda (see Appendix A) and three excerpts from Block's *Flawless Consulting,* which describes the

ideas behind strength-based approaches. The first excerpt introduced the Whole-System Process by which all members engage (Block, 2011, pp.180–182).

The first excerpt covered the ground rules for the successful approach, outlining the rules and mindset necessary for full participation for the management, consultant, and staff. Informed by a better understanding of the ground rules and basic concepts of the approach, I hoped that the participants would be more open to the process. As a result, they could ask questions during meetings that would further clarify their understanding of their participation.

The second excerpt introduced the concepts of discovering gifts, capacities, and possibilities (Block, 2011). The approach focused on "what is working in a system now, and what a system longs to create in the future" (Block, 2011, p.183). I intended this excerpt to pre-frame our discussions on commitment and sustainable solutions. The excerpt also compares strengths-based approaches with problem-focused approaches. Rather than viewing the issue as a problem to be solved, the approach focuses on capacity and future possibilities. AI uses this approach, and understanding it would potentially assist the participants in the process (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Explaining the AI approach's advantages may also divert much-needed energy towards assessing its assets and imagining future possibilities.

The third excerpt focused on a case in the Healthcare industry, where participants renegotiated the patient-doctor relationship to affect a different way of approaching patient care (Block, 2011). In the example, the staff and patients approached healthcare collaboratively and assisted in building trust. One comment by a participant illustrates the trust-building process.

"The more we showed patients our unfiltered uncertainties and concerns, the more they were able to trust and contribute." (Block, 2011, p.194).

Within the CNUW, one of the presenting factors was a disconnect between operations, leadership, and the Board of directors. Separated departments had existed for many years, creating barriers to communication between all three parts of the organization. The Corona Norco United Way could potentially renegotiate the relationship between the staff,

leadership, and board of directors using the Whole-System Process outlined in the case study, establishing trust and communication.

The prework generated reactions immediately. I received feedback from one board member, including comments such as, “not sure if this is the right approach for our meeting”. The feedback indicated resistance to the process at an early stage, so we decided to meet and discuss it. We met for breakfast and discussed the pre-work and the formality of the process, how it felt like a research project. The Board member had also spoken with other Board members to discuss their reaction to the pre-work. They said, ‘the pre-work feels like overkill, and there is no clear connection between what you asked us to do and what we are trying to accomplish.’ In other words, there was a concern that I might be too focused on the academics and the project, leading me to go through unnecessary steps to solve our current problems. I asked questions and listened to the concerns. I asked, ‘what would you like to see instead?’. They commented, ‘it’s just that this process seems way too complicated, and it feels like you are making it harder than it needs to be because of the research project. That’s fine, and I want you to get your research done, but not if it’s going to affect how quickly we move. It might be too complicated.’ I realized that I had made a couple of key statements which led to the sentiments I heard. In the last board meeting, I said, ’This is what I was doing in my project. This is what I have been waiting for’. Before the conversation, I recorded in my journal that ‘I am excited to begin the research and I feel as if the events are unfolding as I predicted’. Upon reflection, I realized that the statement that caused concern resulted from my excitement, but it was exclusive and created a rift between myself and the board. Through that statement, I had indicated that there was a plan I was following that they did not have visibility to. I reassured the board member that I was relating the research to the occurring events and no plan. I was merely excited that I had researched material that prepared me to facilitate the discussions and work we needed to navigate the current situation.

The tension between my statements as a researcher and board President indicated a problem with navigating role duality as a researcher and participant (Coghlan 2019). In my personal journal, I indicated that ‘I feel a little foolish and realize that there

is truth to the opinion. I became overly focused on how important this was to the project and neglected to think about how this was affecting others'. Upon reflection, I also realized that I was a little more nervous about how the theory matched up with the action, and I had such a strong reaction because the path we chose confirmed what I predicted.

I more fully explained how the basic understanding of the underlying concepts would help the group move through difficult concepts in the time allotted. After a little discussion, the Board member who challenged me said, 'I didn't thoroughly read the excerpts and was upset about the amount of pre-work as much as the process.' I summarized the concepts during our meeting and explained how it was relevant. During reflection from my journal, I realized that delivering the pre-work through email in the form of readings generated resistance in this board member. I also realized that they had reached out to others and generated resistance based on their influence. I told the board member I would bring it up with the entire board during our Discovery meeting. They agreed to continue and that it was the right path, though they were proceeding based on 'trust' rather than the process. The board member left that meeting reassured but still sceptical. We brought the topic up again during the introductory portion of the Discovery meeting.

4.5 Day of the Meeting

We scheduled the meeting at the Corona Norco United Way headquarters on June 12th, 2019. In the introductory conversation, board members discussed their reactions to the pre-work, including comments such as, 'That was a lot of reading!' and 'I found the case study very interesting, especially the concept of positive deviance'. Almost immediately, the pre-work topic generated feedback on the same topic I had received before the day of the meeting. I addressed the issue transparently and discussed the meeting I had with the board member. I proceeded to clarify the statements I had made at the meeting where I experienced role duality conflict. The board's reactions were positive as they acknowledged that they 'had similar thoughts' to the Board member who surfaced the issue and, 'I'm relieved we are discussing it, I was confused on what the goal was'. Something I had overlooked was giving the participants a complete picture of my history with the United Way and how my education and community work are related.

I reiterated my commitment to the United Way. Also, I confirmed that if the board decided to discontinue involvement in the thesis project, I would change my thesis's subject, but the work would continue the path we were on. That satisfied the participants, and they agreed to continue with the research and the AI approach.

Next came the ground rules. Ground rules are important in keeping dialogue on track and allowing participants' voices to be heard (Block, 2011). The ground rules were as follows:

- There must be complete transparency.
- Management joins the proceedings as full participants.
- The groups must be a full cross-section of the whole system.
- Differences in status, power, title, and function disappear during the process. Everyone must be ready to speak up.
- If members choose not to participate, they surrender their right to complain or be heard.
- There is an emphasis on the future and what the group wants to create together.
- The session ends with agreements on the next steps and who is going to work on them.
- Consultants give up the expert role.

The first four and very last ground rules deal with power differences and transparency in communication. These themes were also concerns that emerged in the thematic coding analysis I conducted later in the process in the form of communication, transparency commitment, a culture of dedication, honesty, trust, authentic, genuine, and accountability, which led to second-order themes of values, culture, processes, education, leadership, obstacles and finally second-order aggregate dimensions of Internal and External Processes and Mission and Vision (Appendix Q). The commitment to transparency was the first and most important for the dialogue to generate commitment during the process and later stages (Coghlan, 2019; Block, 2011). The commitment of management to join the proceedings as full participants had special relevance for our group. The Corona Norco United Way had a history of disconnection between the Board

of directors before the Discovery meeting. I designed the information and consent stages to bring participants into the process the same way.

The years leading up to the Appreciative Inquiry process saw a separation between the staff, leadership, and the board. Keeping in mind that the staff was two people in 2015, and as of 2020, there were six, the separation became more and more evident. All four ground rules involved undoing hierarchical structures and power imbalances to remove any obstacles to the free flow of ideas. The rules also ensured coverage of all aspects of the organization, hence the name Whole System Approach. The authority held by management, or the board of directors may permit them to either hold back their input or suppress input from other participants. The consultant must also give up their power to guide the process or influence its path other than as a full participant and successfully navigating role duality Roth, J., Shani, A. and Leary, M., 2007). The rules had a two-fold effect of bringing the power imbalance into the light and asking the participants to actively mitigate the effects. The next four ground rules dealt more specifically with the participants' individual responsibilities to give their input or forfeit the opportunity.

Rule five addressed any participants who had chosen not to engage in the meeting but are still full participants of the project. First, agreeing to go along with whatever decisions the rest of the group made without their input represented a commitment to decisions made without their input. Secondly, the rule encouraged participation and not resisting the momentum of the work later in the process. Rules six and seven focused on the process of future action and formalizing the results. Finally, we moved on to the breakout sessions with a clear picture of the ground rules and agenda. We followed the agenda discussion by breaking out into the semi-structured interviews, which included nine questions designed to move us through the three types of inquiry (see Appendix B). We then opted to come back together to conduct the 'construct meaning' interviews (see Appendix C) as a group. I created the interview forms using Schein's Dynamics of Helping and the three forms of Inquiry: pure, diagnostic, and confrontive (Coghlan, 2019). Each interview form starts with questions designed to garner information about the organization and move towards the participant's thoughts. Finally, the questions challenge the

participants to discuss how they would intervene and change course. By moving through the three stages of Inquiry, the participants are encouraged to explore the topic, analyse the information, and then engage in a dialogue with the interviewer, potentially gleaning new perspectives (Coghlan, 2019). I designed the first interview breakout to allow the participants to gather their thoughts using the themes from the extant literature, such as roles, leadership, and processes (Coule, 2015; Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Friedrich et al., 2009).

All the participants were separated into random interview pairs and chose spaces to conduct the interviews. The discomfort was palpable, especially as they interacted with people they do not normally engage. I gave the pairs twenty minutes to complete the interviews. After the breakout interviews, everyone came back together, and we began to share the results in group form. The discourse proceeded spontaneously, and I acted as the facilitator and part of a breakout interview pair. The pairs were volunteering to share as they felt comfortable. As the pairs shared, I placed the data on a whiteboard and asked follow-up questions for clarification. I used shapes, proximity, and symbols to indicate relationships and themes (Berends and Deken, 2019). We produced a map of the external and internal processes of the Corona Norco United Way from this interaction (Figure 11). After conducting the breakout session for interviews, we reviewed it together and engaged in meaning-making as a group.

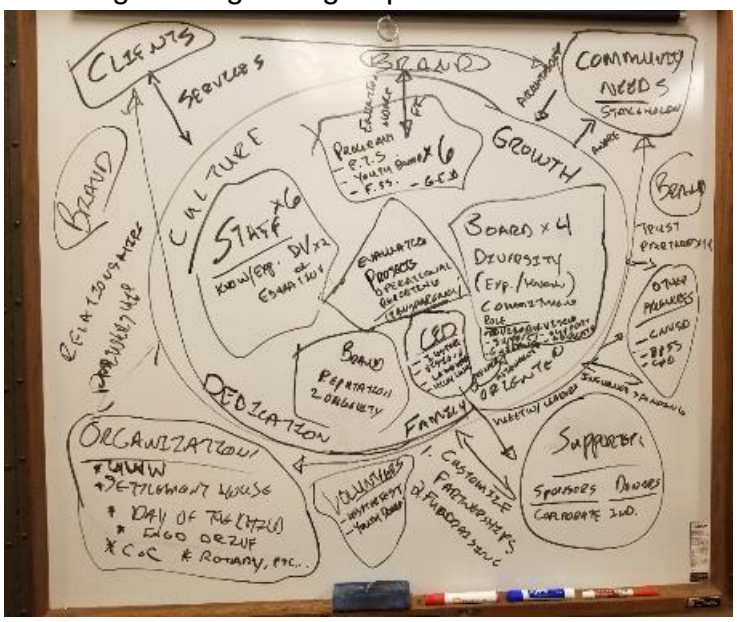


Figure 11- Visual Map of the Corona Norco United Way

The information flowed from multiple directions at once. I started by asking the first question on the breakout interview, ‘What has worked well?’. As participants started to share, I captured their input on the whiteboard. I used multiplication symbols to indicate where multiple pairs reinforced the same assets as highlighted (Figure 12). I designed the question to elicit what the participants viewed as assets using the first three types of Inquiry from Schein’s Dynamics of Helping Hands, pure Inquiry (Coughlan and Coghlan, 2008). Assets can take many forms from processes to people, and the openness of the question cast a wide net to generate insight into the strengths of the Corona Norco United Way. Next, I captured concepts or perceptions of the internal organization by listing them along the circumference of the circle. Participants shouted out the results from their interviews as individual words like ‘growth’, ‘culture’, ‘dedication’, and ‘family-oriented’. The centre’s shape became a list of processes or qualities that the participants felt should connect the five shapes’ assets, and I described these as an internal process. The internal processes were evaluation, projects, operational reporting, and transparency. Questions one through six flowed together as the sharing gained speed. The participants quickly latched on to the intention, which was to describe the strengths, assets, talents, and working processes of the Corona Norco United Way. When we got to question seven, there was a slight shift.

The phases of Appreciative Inquiry often overlap with each other. In Discovery, there were many times where Dreaming (imagining what the United Way could be) became part of the conversation or where drawing the concept map became an element of Design. When we started to discuss question seven, we started to talk about what we wanted in a CEO. I designed the question to elicit input on our relationship with the Executive director or CEO. I believe that because we were in the process of looking for a CEO, this question became about reimagining what we wanted.

The conversation was hot on the heels of our most recent audit, and we had experienced conversations with a model CEO from another United Way, so we were primed to define the role. The input started as to how we wanted to relate to the internal and external assets of the CNUW, and we started to discuss whose job it was to interact. For example, we were looking for inspiration and high-level communication with internal and external assets; however, the board realized that this would be too much of an operational role and assigned the behaviours to a future CEO role. One board member commented, ‘well, we don’t want to keep giving direction. We need to remain at the right altitude. Shouldn’t those be the characteristics of a new CEO?’.

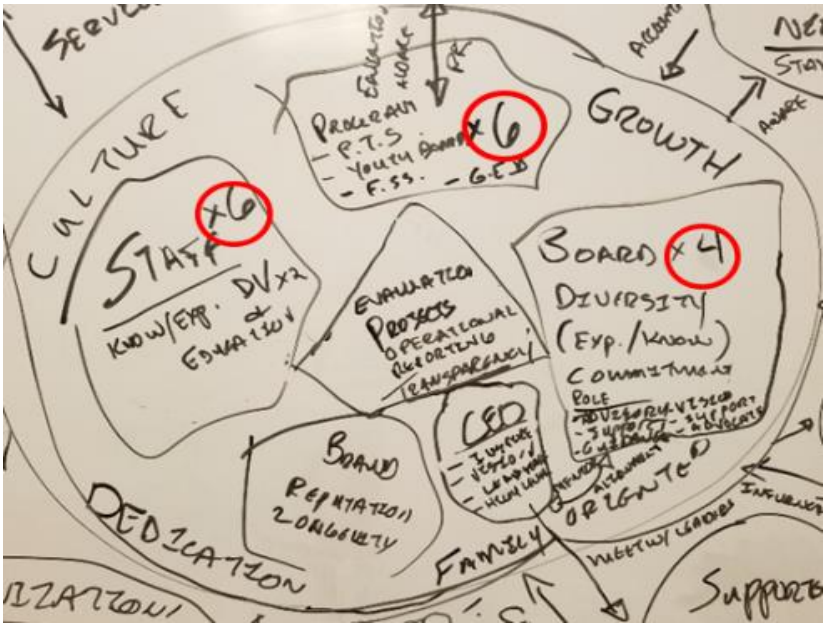


Figure 12- Excerpt from the Discovery Assets Map of External and Internal Processes

Question eight was much the same discussion, which helped solidify the participant’s ideas about how the CEO, Staff, and board should interact. More and more, it became clear that the board was looking for a high-level interaction to guide the organization through the CEO while maintaining a close connection with the staff through communication and sharing purpose. Comments like ‘It’s time to get back to our main role’ and ‘we don’t want to get in the way of a new CEO’ reinforced this sentiment. Concepts such as family-oriented, dedicated, and culture were expressions of a desire to stay connected to each other and our communities as more than just an idea, but a culture that would define the CNUW.

Question nine on the breakout interview took us into external relationships and assets concerning the internal assets and processes. The image started to take shape more clearly in this part of the meeting. Naming the organizations we work with allowed us to differentiate between our internal and external assets. Admittedly, the wording of the question was cumbersome. I had pre-framed the participants with a basic understanding of internal and external assets. However, the language of the material provided still did not lead to a clear understanding of the relationships. Visual mapping facilitated understanding by creating a common understanding of complex dimensions and provided an 'intermediary step between raw data and abstract conceptualisation' (Langley, 1999, p.702). By using visual mapping, we were able to visually explore the relationships (Figure 13) between our organization and the people in our service area and express multiple concepts and their relationships with each other clearly (Langley, 1999). For example, we identified the community needs as representative of the community and their specific needs, so the asset's name identified more than the stakeholder. It identified how that asset related to our organization. We then identified the difference between how we related to the asset and how they related to us. While the relationship is two-way, we identified differences in the expectations of the two parties. We are looking for awareness of the communities' needs to address them better, and the community needs are looking for accountability in how we hand funds and provide services. A piece that we left out of this diagram was the flow of funding to the community needs asset, which helps those in need and increases our reputation and brand. The relationships identified speak to the CNUW's fundamental mechanism to serve the community's needs in a way that builds credibility and trust through accountability and awareness. By increasing the brand of the CNUW, funding opportunities arise if properly marketed back to the same community. Should the need for the CNUW disappear, then the funding and organization would also scale down appropriately. The planned obsolescence of the CNUW ensures

accountability and efficiency in serving those needs. Next, we turned our attention to the supporters of the CNUW.

Figure 13- Examples of relationships between external assets and the organization

Supporters of the CNUW included private donors, sponsors, corporate sponsors, and volunteers (Figure 14). We established that these different stakeholders required customized partnerships during the dialogue and were key to its fundraising efforts. The relationships are also two-way, as many of our donors are also volunteers. They give both funds and their time/talents to contribute. We recognized a need for higher-level connections, brand to brand, and a ground-level connection to the volunteers doing the work. Our organization's nature is that we cannot pay for all the workers we need to accomplish projects, so donating time and money is crucial to the CNUW and the community's well-being. We recognized that there are multiple levels at which each supporter operates in connection to the CNUW. Therefore, a clear path for the CEO and the Board to interact at all levels was crucial in the strategic plan to guide us. The dialogue became more focused on the CEO as we defined our roles concerning the organization, which I will discuss in the next section.

Figure 14 - Mapping of External Stakeholders: Supporters

An interesting emergence was the CEO's focus as the main internal asset for connecting with internal and external stakeholders (Figure 15). Before the mapping exercise, we were unclear regarding the roles and responsibilities of the CEO/Executive Director. Minutes and other archival documents show the subjects as separate and follow the different debate and research lines, making up one of the three linear decision-making themes (Figure 10, p.79), leadership transition. However, during the Discovery phase, the three separate lines converged as the conversations became more closely related. Comments from the participants like 'Well those are related because the CEO [leadership transition] will affect our how we do things [processes] and how we make decisions in the board of directors [board transformation].'

Visually mapping the process allowed us to clarify what those specifics were. Assisting the mapping was access to new online UW resources. Over several meetings/ months, we had gained access and began educating ourselves on succession planning. We also began asking for assistance from local, state, and global United Way resources. Eventually, we landed on the two options of merging or hiring a new CEO and began the process of defining who that person needed to be and what their experience and qualifications needed to be. However, it still was not clear how the CEO would fit in with the organization.

We realized that several internal and external processes relied upon the connections and relationships that a CEO forms from the mapping process. The arrows circled in red (Figure 15) represent the relationships and influence that we felt the

CEO would leverage to get the work done. Before we added these arrows, we were discussing processes that we saw as internal to the organization. When we tried to assign them to a specific asset, we gravitated towards a centralized role for the board, which was the opposite of what we were trying to achieve. Once we identified
this pattern, we started to talk about what role we wanted to play in the organization, centralized or collective. The tension between centralized and collective management was evident in this conversation as we discussed the need to 'fly at the right altitude' for the Board of directors so the CEO could do their job. We discussed how we needed to 'separate ourselves from the organization's daily operations' though we could not do so in the past because we did not have a leader that would fill in the roles. We realized that the only way we would stay in the collective leadership role we were trying to achieve would be to have a 'leader who could handle the internal processes and execute the Corona Norco United Way's vision and mission'.

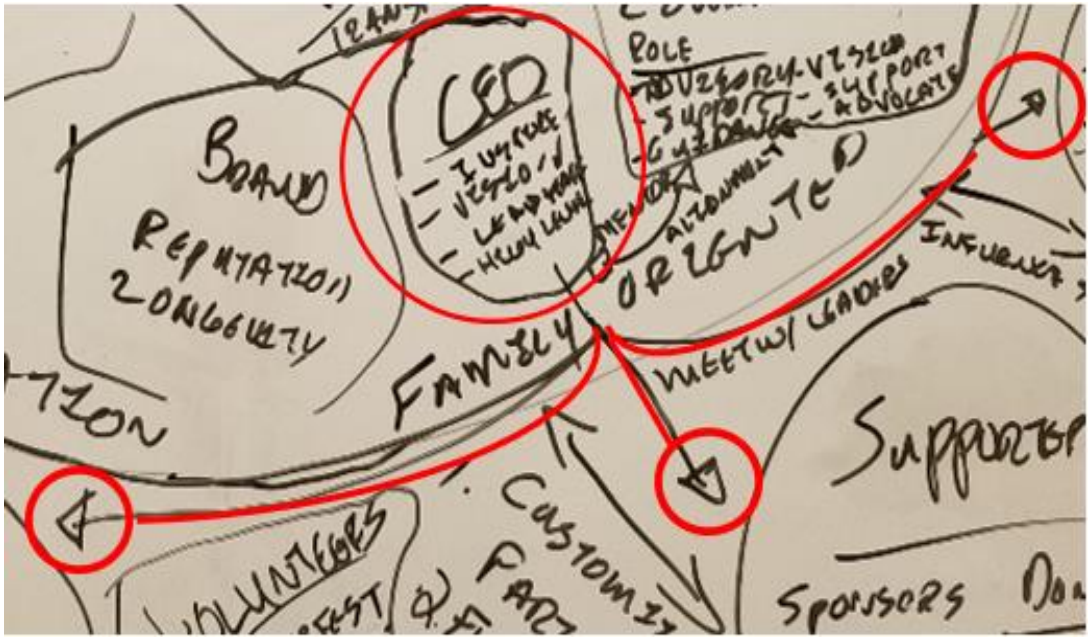


Figure 15 - Mapping CEO relationships

Partner organizations, as external stakeholders, represented a complex process that lacked clarity when we began the dialogue. We identified partnership as a critical component of relationships (Figure 16), particularly because we understood a level of dependence with the organizations. As a branch of the global brand United Way Worldwide, we pay a fee annually and comply with audits that outline a minimum standard meeting organizational expectations. Therein lies the tension between compliance and

performance. While we needed to comply, to remain a branch, decisions to operate in a performance role as leaders could potentially grow our community impact exponentially.

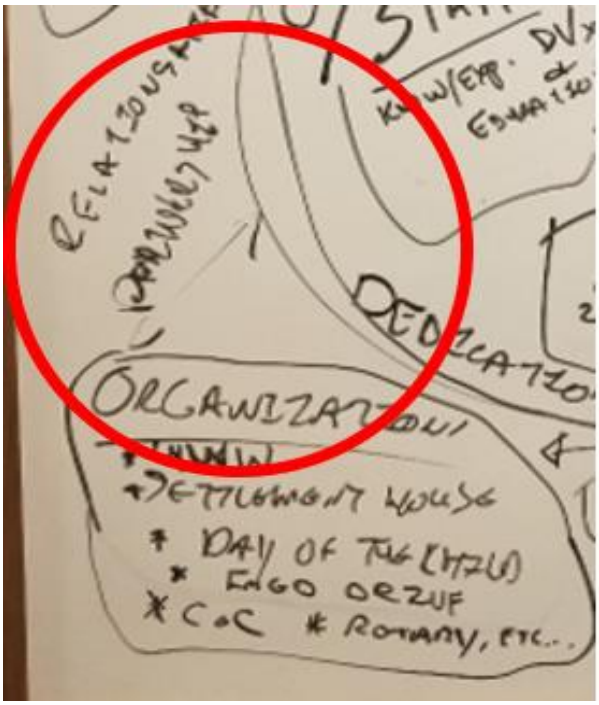


Figure 16 - Mapping of External Stakeholders and Processes: Partner Organizations

Our participants' compliance mindset was standing in opposition to many of the potentially positive resources available. For example, our personal biases on leading an organization originated in a centralized understanding of leadership where a chain of command and hierarchy dominated decision-making. The decision to proceed with Appreciative Inquiry signalled a collective leadership choice that was difficult to apply in the dialogue. Organizations like the Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary club represented overlap where Directors on our Board had leadership roles in related organizations with a different culture. In those organizations, there was stability and clarity as to leadership and roles. Appreciative Inquiry kept us aware of these choices and allowed us to choose collective leadership choices throughout the dialogue.

The final section of the map covered clients as external stakeholders of the CNUW. Clients are different from supporters because they receive the support and services the CNUW provides (Figure 17). An interesting overlap, however, is that supporters are also clients in many respects. Clients, more than most other stakeholders, are involved in all

aspects of the organization. Many of the volunteers I met began as clients, and the United Way inspired them in the past. The reputation that the CNUW builds through serving clients affects the fundraising and volunteer supply for the future. The strategic plan would need to include a way to connect clients and volunteers intentionally to co-create brand, reputation, and impact communities. While mapping out the CNUW, it became clear that there were times when assessing the current state-led to discussing future states. One of the major advantages of a strengths-based approach is that it tends to generate ideas related to growth and imagining the future, partially because the participants can get a clear and aligned picture of the status quo (Ludema et al., 2006). On the other hand, a problem-focused approach potentially limits the participants by fixing their perceptions of the boundaries set by their experiences and may provide resistance based on a personal bias (Block, 2011).

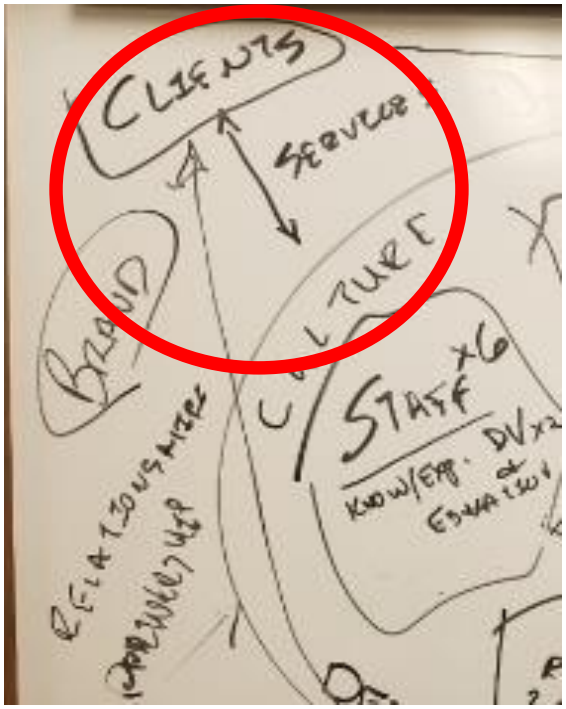


Figure 17- Mapping External Stakeholders and processes: Clients

4.6 Summary

The Discovery phase represented a very robust dialogue, where for the first time, all members of the organization were full participants. However, the gaps in levels of

understanding and operational savvy were evident as we conducted the discussion. Staff members were grateful and excited to be a part of the process, yet unclear on their roles. The lack of a cohesive strategic plan had contributed to that ambiguity. Furthermore, the Board of directors did not have the alignment and clarity needed to guide them. In essence, we were aligning during the Discovery phase and demonstrating a commitment to creating the strategic plan together. The three issues facing the organization became clearer in this phase and converged as we drew connections. The convergence of the three areas revealed how the themes were interconnected. By holding the three areas of change separate, the board created more work and reduced the synergy possible through collectively leading change.

4.7 Tensions within Discovery

There were three major takeaways from the Discovery phase related to the tensions and our use of agency-based behaviours. First, defining internal and external processes as separate kept us from recognizing how the different assets interacted to create a holistic approach to impacting the community. Creating the map caused relationships and their two-way nature to become clearer. Instead of changing the environment around us, we began to understand our place in a larger ecology where interactions happened concurrently, at different levels, speeds, and intensity. Therefore, our processes must reflect planning for how to manage all the relationships simultaneously.

Second, conformance with traditional organization models and understanding the Corona Norco United Way has restricted performance in achieving our goals. By viewing the CNUW as we always had, we denied the changing ecology and the changing organization. In retrospect, I recorded in my journals that ‘it feels as if the organization was trying to change, and we held it back.’ The resistance to change was palpable as introducing new concepts about how to view the organization required a tremendous amount of energy and repetition. However, there were sparks of energy and inspiration the closer we moved to a shared brighter future which I noted ‘gave me hope that the process was working, and the future is bright.’ Forward-looking goals based on our strengths highlighted our common purpose and revealed room for multiple paths to

achieve them. Our view became more cyclical and less linear, evidenced by comments such as, ‘we should circle back to this’, and ‘last time we discussed this’ where reflection called on earlier work to inform the work we engaged in. The organization’s performance took on a dynamic and ongoing attribute that we would need to nurture in future phases.

Third, the reliance on a centralized role had led to a disconnect between the staff, leadership, and the board. There are strong connections and overlaps between the tensions, and it seems that one can precipitate another. Leading centrally had contributed to the division of internal and external processes into separate and disconnected systems. Additionally, adherence to old ways of doing things and individual, organizational structure concepts stunted growth and tended toward agency-based behaviours. We viewed diverging interests as negative and members as parts of a machine that required oversight. Therefore, we had to focus on the tensions and adopt stewardship-based behaviours intentionally. Acting collectively to realize growth required us to clearly define and map our balanced approach to internal and external processes. Through this phase, we began to see that we were all part of the organization’s processes. Knowing our roles, acting collectively, and viewing the organization as a collection of processes within a larger ecology helped us become nimbler more open to change. As we moved to the Dream phase, the aim would be to apply a deeper understanding of our choices and move to envision a future state in navigating these tensions.

5 Dream and Design Phases

During the Discovery phase, we created a visual map (Figure 11, p.94) that visually expressed our shared understanding of our current organizational state. In this chapter, I discuss the Dream and Design phase meetings, discuss findings from the first three phases, and use thematic coding to bridge the theory-practice gap moving from the abstract concepts and themes to practical application in updating the strategic plan. I begin in the following section with the lead up to the meeting and our financial restructuring.

5.1 Dream Phase

The Dream phase of Appreciative Inquiry involves envisioning what will be possible. This phase aims to ask “unconditional positive questions” (Ludema et al., 2006, p.157)

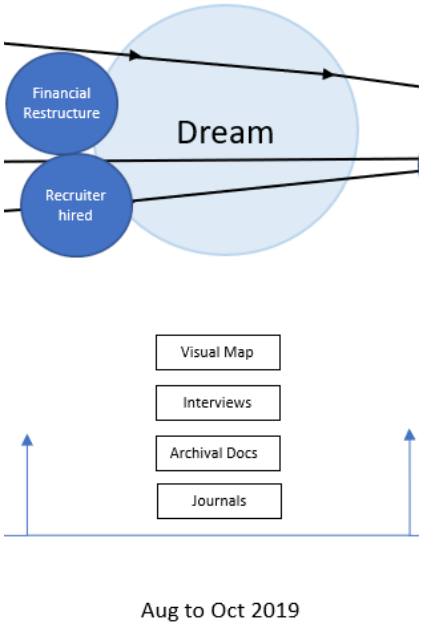


Figure 18 - Dream Map and Timeline for the Corona Norco United Way Appreciative Inquiry Process

to generate positive alternatives for the organization. In between the Discovery and Dream phases, we worked to restructure finances. I illustrated how these events relate to the three major issues in Figure 18. The board also followed through on our decision to hire a recruiter to search for our new CEO. In the following sections, I examine these events in detail.

5.1.1 Financial Restructure

In 2019 after the Executive Director’s departure, audit findings revealed a considerable sum of funds counted as pledges receivable that were carried forward from year to year. We had completely missed the practice during audits and oversight actions by the board breaking trust, and we quickly started to look for accountability and answers. The findings represented a fiscal crisis, and we began to engage in agency-based behaviours. During the regular board meetings, board members commented, ‘How could this happen?’ and ‘where will we get the funds to continue operations?’. The problem was

twofold. Centralized leadership was the primary leadership style adopted during the ED tenure, with the power and decision-making squarely in the hands of the ED. The second issue was that the financial infrastructure was inadequate and inaccurate, and though the board had engaged in agency-based behaviours, oversight was lacking. In essence, we adopted a centralized leadership style and took a conformance role but then stepped back and did not execute leadership or role actions. Now, during the crisis, we saw the ripple effects of the choices we made. This series of events was shocking as we realized that we lost a third of our assets due to a fraudulent accounting practice. The result was an organization focused on revenues and a threat state from the new financial context.

Many comments came from board meetings, such as, ‘we cannot afford that now’ or ‘we need to be able to pay the bills, let’s cut expenses’. However, we already had a lean operational approach and did not have much more room to cut. As a result, there was an increased interest in changing course, and merging became part of regular conversations. The first evidence of an intentional change in behaviour occurred at this point. The board had acted collectively earlier in the process, and we saw this behaviour repeat in the discussion while revisiting our course of action. While some board members made comments like ‘This is a much worse financial situation than we had anticipated’ and ‘I do not see how we can survive this’, others stayed the course and commented on themes of ‘community’ and ‘investment’.

The event represented our first big challenge to our resolve. We identified that we had made a collective choice during the Discovery phase and that the collective process was not a one-time choice. It became increasingly clear that we would need to make ongoing collective choices and that each member would be at different places in navigating their tensions. Some board members were trending towards a centralized position, while others maintained collective leadership behaviours. The staggered reactions in a collective context allowed us to maintain our course despite the tension with collectively-minded participants reigning in those who wanted to change course with comments like ‘we decided to go down this path and we should stick to it’ and ‘we will not survive if we do what we did in the past. As a result, we were able to have a robust dialogue in which we continued to reinforce our decision to invest in a new CEO.

5.1.2 Recruiter Hired

Appreciative Inquiry as a whole system process focuses on full participation from all organization members (Block, 2011), and after the Discovery phase, we realized that our hiring process was exclusive to the staff and existing leadership. Therefore, we sought a process that would include the staff and the board in the decision. The staff had expressed concern that a new CEO would disrupt their work, indicated by comments like 'we're afraid a new leader won't know us or how we work'. I recorded in my personal journal that I also had concerns about disrupting the organization. However, it was clear that a change was needed, and disruption could be positive. The intention was to reduce or eliminate resistance to the new leader by giving the staff the most powerful voice in the process.

We accomplished a whole system process by having a dialogue among the board members about the hiring process and deciding to adopt collective leadership behaviours. We agreed to include the staff interview as a final step and gave the staff the power to approve or disapprove of their new leader. First, the recruiting firm engaged a multi-staged process involving interviews with two associates from the firm, a leadership inventory, an interview with the head recruiter using the inventory data, and a panel interview with the Board members. After all these steps, we decided to include a final interview with the staff. I will cover the events of the interview process and hiring the CEO later in this chapter. Having detailed the events between the Discovery and Dream phases, in the next section, I will cover how we engaged in the next phase of the Appreciative Inquiry process, the Dream meeting.

5.1.3 Dream Meeting

We invited the staff on the day of the Dream meeting as part of a regularly scheduled board meeting. Participants included all staff, Board Members, and the IED. A review of the visual map (Figure 11, p. 94) was the primary prompt for the discussion to ensure that all participants remembered the work before and had a chance to ask any clarifying questions. In addition, the review of the map represented the reflect, or evaluate, stage of the action research cycle (Figure 6, p. 58). There were multiple reactions to the review of the visual map, ranging from confusion to insight. The advantage of providing the map to the participants before the Dream meeting was considerable forethought into the topic by the participants indicated by high participation rates during the meeting,

enhancing the whole system process. Next, I combined the analysis of the organizational map with two interview questions using a semi-structured interview format from Schein's Dynamics of Helping (see Appendix E) (Coughlan and Coghlan, 2008).

The first question, 'You wake up in 2024; what does the Corona Norco United Way look like?' was derived from case studies. The question placed the participants into a frame of mind to consider a five-year picture of what could be, aligning the work with creating a five-year vision in the strategic plan, the main objective. The second question in the interview form, 'What was the most inspired time you felt at the Corona Norco United Way?' was also derived from case studies where Appreciative Inquiry successfully tapped into the participants' personal experiences. Research cites inspiration as critical to commitment in organizations and instrumental in change (Rupprecht, E.A., Waldrop, J.S. and Grawitch, M.J., 2013; Sosik and Dinger, 2007; Warner, 2015; Rowson and McGilchrist, 2013; Raskin, P., Banuri, T., Gallop, G., Gutman, P., Hammond, A., Kates, R., Swart,R., 2002; Cohen and Bradford, 2011; Alvesson, M., Hardy, C. and Harley, B., 2008). Ludema et al. (2006) also connect inspiration to critical change processes within Appreciative Inquiry. Connecting the participants to that critical theme would enable a more effective and sustainable change in the organization and bring forward the participants' voices.

5.1.4 Revenue as the Current Focus

I instructed the participants to pair up as they saw fit, encouraging them to select people they did not have regular contact or had not partnered with before. After interviewing each other for ten minutes, we brought everyone back together to share back. We captured the feedback on a whiteboard as we conversed (Figure 19). During the discussion, it became clear that revenue topics connected to increased revenues and funding programs. The first topic discussed was increasing revenues indicated in the graphic by an upward arrow. The checkmark indicated that more than one pair shared this vision for the future, as indicated in (Figure 20). Comments such as, 'if we only had the money', or 'additional staff would let us accomplish this, but we do not have the money to hire more people' centred around these sentiments. Multiple comments focused on not having enough hours and having trouble meeting making ends meet. There was talk of needing second jobs and how the extra workload split their attention. Additionally, we

discussed staff productivity and the resources that they had to get the work done. Revenues became a multi-layered theme, seen as the solution to multiple problems. Among the problems were clerical duties, accounting, client intake, crisis response, physical space, funds for clients, and service quality. Five of the first six themes shared reflect this dialogue.

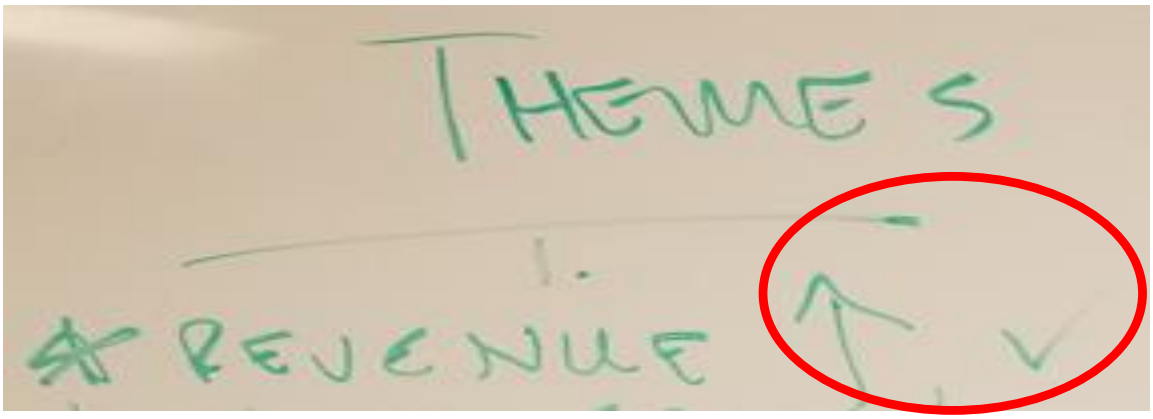


Figure 20 - Changing Revenue

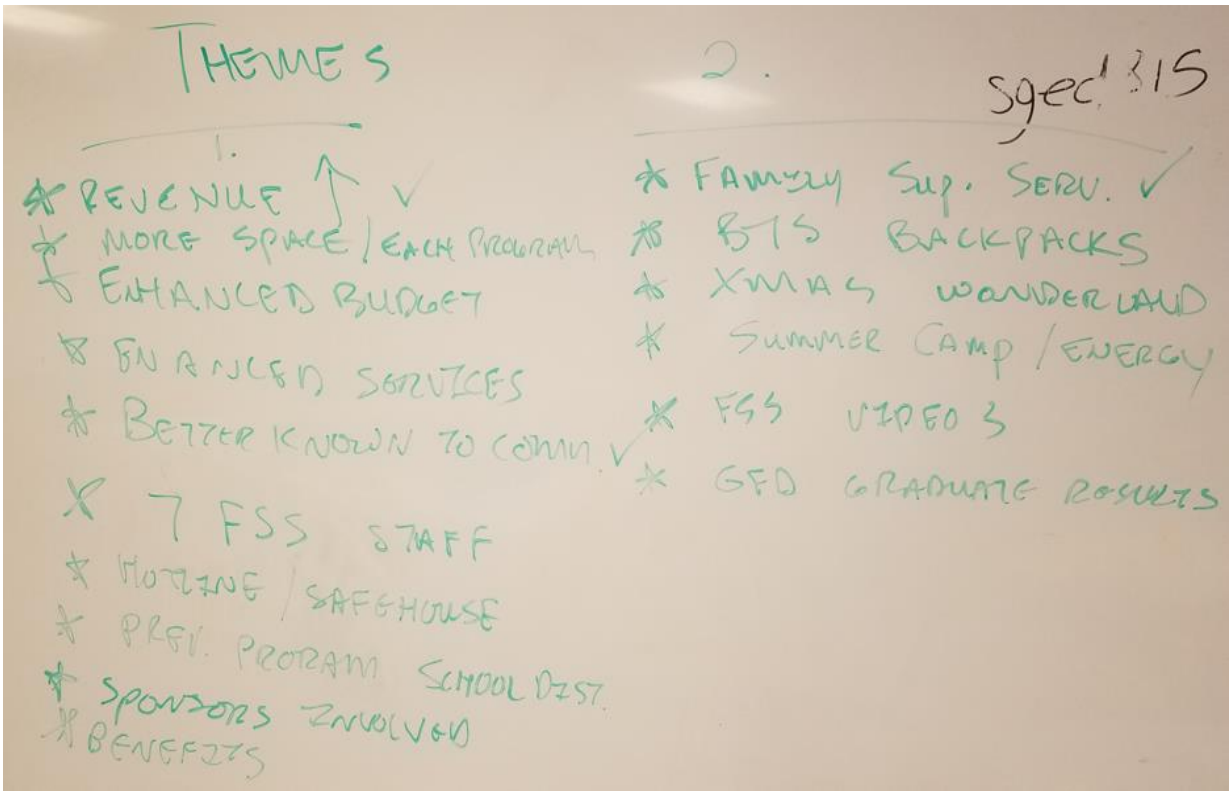


Figure 19- Topic List from Dream Meeting

The next several topics also reflected this thinking (Figure 21). More space included a robust dialogue around each program having its own physical space for operations. The Family Support Services (FSS) was the domestic violence counselling and crisis intervention program discussed during most dialogue. The office space consisted of executive offices with a small conference table, lobby, reception desk, and two private offices in one wing and the FSS in the other. A multi-purpose room separated the two wings in the middle that housed the Children's Center, where kids whose parents were receiving counselling could do homework or engage with staff. The space was inadequate, however, because of the confidential nature of the counselling. The FSS required private records and counselling that often conflicted with programs such as the Homework Club conducted in the multi-purpose room.

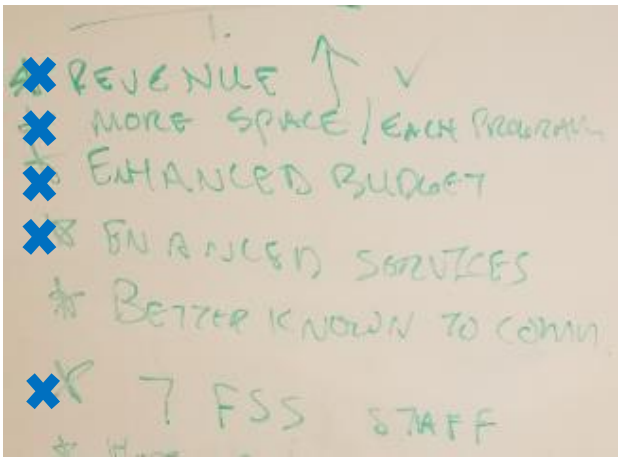


Figure 21- First Six Topics of the Dream Activity

The fifth topic was a mixture of increasing revenues and managing the organization's brand (Figure 22). The brand included references such as reputation, awareness, accessibility, and advertising. Essentially, the brand included anything that had to do with the community members in the service area being aware of the CNUW. The participants said specifically 'that increased awareness would result in increased revenues'. However, they also said 'that increased awareness was a sense of pride.' For example, the participants stated that the 'good work that the CNUW was doing was going unnoticed', serving to limit the revenue potential and take away from the work's 'recognition and reward'. The participants said several times that while they 'did not expect recognition for the work, because that is not why we do it', or it 'felt good' when

people were aware of how they impacted the community. From my personal journals, I recorded that I felt I had learned something valuable, that they had a personal stake in the awareness of the community. They seemed to feel that their work lessened in value when others weren't aware of it. Not only from an impact on the community but also a sense of pride. Therefore, the brand was as much an external factor as it was an internal factor for the participants.

The strong connection to revenue themes throughout this phase and formal and informal meetings outside the phase provides some explanation for the internal focus, in this case, on the staff and the number of hours they work. In this sense, the choice to focus on agency-based behaviours displayed a lack of understanding of how internal and external processes interact to produce revenue. Therefore, including the staff in collective decision-making could provide the needed information to balance tensions related to resources.

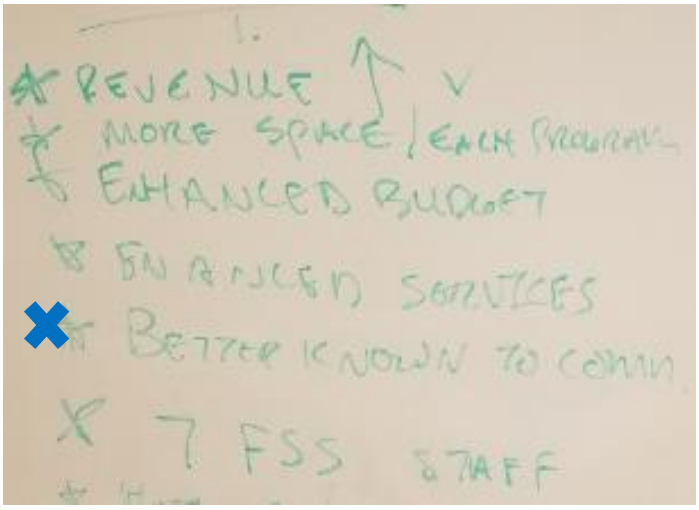


Figure 22- Fifth Topic from Dream Activity

5.1.5 Switching to a Future Focus

The seventh topic, Hotline/Safehouse (Figure 23), marked a transition from resource-based dialogue to new services and represented the first commitment to a different future. The first six topics were forward-looking but were enhancements to existing services. Implementing a hotline or a safehouse represented an evolution of the existing services into a new form. Many participants discussed a vision for the future where programs and services' growth address a drastically underserved community. For

example, the CNUW had assisted seventy families with domestic violence through FSS in the last year. However, the police department and other governmental agencies had indicated hundreds of incidents and a need for an agency with a larger capacity to handle community members in crisis. Since serving the community's critical needs is a central mission of the United Way, the staff felt the pressure and the inadequacy of the capacity we had at the time.

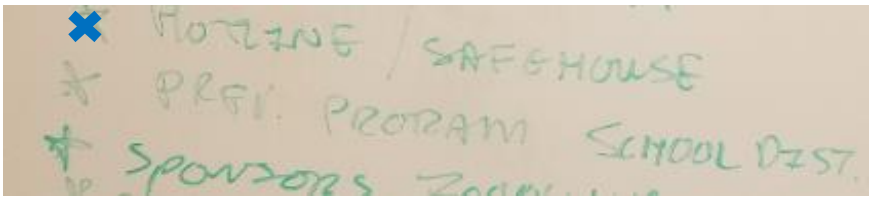


Figure 23- Seventh Topic from Dream Activity

Using a strengths-based approach helped us frame the conversation to build on what we had instead of focusing on what we were missing. Two major impacts of the approach were creating a path where participants made comments like 'they could see a better future' and reframing the conversation indicated by comments such as 'what we were already good at and getting better'. This dialogue was also a foreshadowing of goal setting for our programs. The lack of future-based goals became clear, indicating that the staff was focused on handling what we already had, which did not leave much capacity or resources for growing the programs' quality or size. Without a goal for growth in the future, the organization had become stagnant. The internal focus perpetuated the crisis by not allowing for growth and further reinforced agency-based behaviours. The organization was stuck in a circular cycle while the landscape was changing.

Topic number eight (Figure 24), Preventative Program in the School District, referred to creating a preventative program within the school district to identify at-risk youth and educate high school students, faculty, and staff on domestic violence. The dialogue around the eight topics was focused more vertically, with participants stating that 'prevention at an early age could prevent the need for support services later in life'. Because of the vertical orientation, shifting our mindset from the current state to a possible future state facilitated analysis of upstream and downstream points of impact. The change was significant again because it represented the participants stepping out of the day-to-day operations and viewing how we could impact the community in another way that

amplified further downstream. The tension between internal and external processes became evident in this conversation as we identified how we could make a preventative program a reality. The shift from the beginning of the meeting where we were concerned with what we had to what was possible was palpable in the seventh and eighth topics.

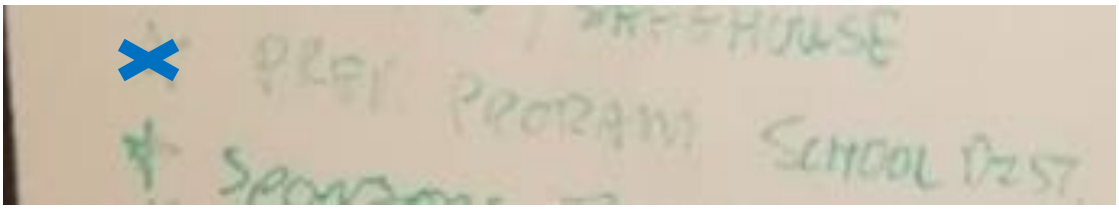


Figure 24- Dream Activity - Eighth Topic

5.1.6 Inspiration as a Future Focus

The second column of topics represent answers to the second question, “What was the most inspired time you felt at the Corona Norco United Way?”. I designed the second question to connect the participants to strong positive experiences where they experienced inspiration. Inspiration was a topic during conversations. Participants commented that it ‘is an important value for the culture of the organization’. We also identified inspiration as an attribute important in the leadership of the board and the CEO during our share back in the Discovery meeting. In literature, inspiration is a value that differentiates leaders from managers (Rupprecht et al., 2013). Sosik and Dinger (2007) relate inspiration to transformational change and necessary components of organizations. Inspiration is also a key value in Appreciative Inquiry, drawing from a history of the power of knowing and interrogative methods (Cooperrider, 1987). Where leaders can inspire, commitment is higher, and subjects are influenced more by the experiences. Therefore, understanding how inspiration showed up in the CNUW was crucial.

Family Support Services was the first of the inspirational topics. Story after story came from the participants. One story detailed a victim of domestic violence who had a short window of time to escape an abusive situation because their abuser was not at home. The participant provided a vivid depiction of the need for our services:

> “The other night, a victim of domestic violence took the opportunity to get out of the house with their two kids and called in a panic with their children crying, looking desperately for a place to stay for the night and food for dinner. They left so quickly

> they didn't even have a change of clothes. Because the abuser kept all the money, they had no resources, so we were able to get them shelter, food, clothing and start to plan for tomorrow. One of us ran to Subway to get sandwiches while another called a shelter we partnered with to provide a place to stay for the night. If we hadn't done that, they would have no choice but to go back, and the abuse would be ten times worse."

As they told these stories, they described the reward they felt for 'helping those in crisis' and 'feeling like they had directly impacted victims and their family's lives.' The participants continued to talk about the future possibilities, such as 'tripling the number of people we could help', '24 hour 7 days a week crisis support', housing, 'funding for critical transitional housing and essential needs', and 'long-term counselling support through group therapy'. The dialogue had shifted more away from living day-to-day and focusing instead on a possible future. Once that vision became more firmly entrenched, the day-to-day operations became minor obstacles that we could overcome instead of roadblocks. Inspiration was key in moving the team from feelings of powerlessness and stagnation to visions of growth in the future.

The remaining programs listed in the second column represent existing programs or innovations to those programs. Family Support Services, Back to School Backpacks, Christmas Wonderland, and Summer Camp were all programs designed to give children the essential school supplies they need to attend school, study, and celebrate holidays held annually. The participants described inspiration in these programs as 'seeing how happy kids were to get new backpacks, school supplies, and presents'. Parents were also relieved to have help 'getting their kids excited' about education and the holidays despite sometimes not having enough to make ends meet. Most supplies for these programs get donated through corporate sponsors. By linking the program back to the *Sponsors Involved* topic earlier in the meeting, participants argued that 'the programs would expand in donations and the number of people served'. They also theorized that 'we would increase engagement through education, training, and other hands to do the work'. Inclusion in how the programs were executed and performing the work could increase the rewards and commitment would possibly be greater to the programs. The idea was that

donors involved in the actual work would be more connected than distant. More connected donors meant more revenues and more help to run the programs.

Regarding the tensions, conformance with the current program would be to execute the current program ‘as is.’ However, the staff stated that they ‘desired a change to the program to increase the present and the future performance rather than doing what we’ve always done’ which was to conform with existing parameters. A revelation I captured in my personal journal from this dialogue is that all participants navigate tensions, not just the board of directors. This finding implies that understanding the tensions may be used to navigate internal and external processes for all organization members, not just the leadership. Increasing the programs’ performance by leveraging internal and external processes represents the staff’s choice to navigate the tension between conformance and performance. The potential for unlocking internal assets is in line with the precepts of Appreciative Inquiry, and the impact it may have when applied is encouraging.

The General Education Development (GED) program is a well-known program in school districts to provide a high school diploma for adults who have not received one. The CNUW has had a standing agreement with the Corona Norco Unified School District (CNUSD) to help provide GED services to the community members in the service area. Specifically, the CNUW provided funds for the tests and helped support students preparing to test for the GED. The dialogue for the Dream activity contained stories about graduates and their families. The participants shared how the individuals’ dedication and progress inspired them, helped advance their education, stabilized their income through better qualifications, and provided better health through improved job opportunities. The participants envisioned increased graduation rates and enrolment through advertising and improved educational staff, consistent with themes that emerged in the archival data and previous phase.

5.1.7 Dreaming Phase Outcome

In the literature review, I established the connection between conformance, agency behaviours, and oversight and control systems. Conversely, performance connects to stewardship behaviours and systems of collaboration, participation, and collective decision-making specifically focused on increasing the capacity or impact of the

organization (Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Cornforth, 2002). Throughout this phase, the participants focused on the performance of the program over conformance. They did this by imagining ways to grow the programs rather than sticking to tradition. Suggestions included reaching out to the volunteer's programs at the CNUW by creating recruiting materials. The idea was that those involved in the CNUW might provide support if they knew the specifics of the support needed. By defining the help needed and advertising internally and externally, volunteers could choose to lend their talents far better than the staff or leadership could. Two more tensions came into play in this dialogue. Collective rather than centralized leadership was a key choice, as the participants suggested, including all our internal and external stakeholders to improve the program.

The participants also navigated internal and external processes by describing ways to leverage two-way relationships. They shared methods such as 'partnering with an agency who had access to more resources because they are in a higher income neighbourhood and sharing the larger database of community members in need satisfying the needs of both agencies'. By aligning organizational processes (Higgins, 2005) focused on external relationships, the participants sought to interact with the CNUW's ecology (Hillman and Dalziel, 2003; Hillman et al., 2009). In addition, having a clearer direction for how the relationship impacts the interaction with the ecological context promotes a more balanced perspective between internal and external resources (Hillman et al., 2000). Combined with a focus on performance over conformance, the GED program's dialogue represented all three tensions being navigated through Appreciative Inquiry to leverage a stewardship approach to envisioning a future program.

Looking back, after the Discovery meeting, we had a clearer picture of the internal and external assets and the connected processes. We engaged in an activity that tapped into a vision for the future and what inspired the participants. From the dialogue, we were able to identify multiple ways to strengthen current assets and innovations for the future. Navigating all three tensions, conformance versus performance, collective versus centralized leadership roles, and internal and external processes proved to be more than just a choice by leadership, but a decision that each participant needed to make. By harnessing the Appreciative Inquiry process, we adopted a mindset that started with an inventory of the current state and then envisioned where the short- and long-term futures

might lie for the programs we run. Therefore, the Dream activity successfully used the Discovery meeting data to transition the current state's understanding to envision a future state. The outcome was two columns of topics (Figure 25), one based on our current state and the other based on inspiration. That table brought form to the data for the next stage of our Appreciative Inquiry Process, Design.

Revenue Topics - Current state based on survival	Inspiration Topics - Future state based on Dream in
More space for each program	Family Support Services
Enhanced Budget	Back To School Backpacks
Enhanced Services	XMAS Wonderland
Better Know n to community	Summer Camp/Energy
7 FSS staff	FSS Videos
Hotline/Safehouse	GED Graduate Resources
Prevention Program w ith the School District	
Get Sponsors Involved	
Benefits	

Figure 25 - Dreaming Phase Outcome - Topics

5.1.8 Dream Summary

Appreciative Inquiry aims to leverage an organization's strengths to address problems they face (Ludema et al., 2006; Cooperrider, 1987; Cooperrider, D.L., Zandee, D.P., Goodwin, L., Avital, M., Boland, R.J., 2013; Cooperrider et al., 2008). By framing the approach to problem-solving in a strengths-based approach focused on growth, positive assets, and collective leadership rather than a deficit-based approach, the participants encourage a future not limited by past experiences but guided by a vision of the future. The Dream phase accomplished several of these important steps. First, we were able to shift mindsets from present-day operations to what was possible in the future. The shift in mindset allowed us to start to view the issues we faced, not as problems but processes that needed fine-tuning with our resources. Furthermore, we were able to focus on what resources would be needed to achieve future states. Secondly, we framed the conversation in terms of what inspired the participants to introduce a positive emotional component to our dialogue. Third, the tensions were present for all the staff members navigating internal and external processes, to the board choosing collective leadership

roles in a holistic approach. Lastly, we modified the visual map to include what the participants envisioned in an inspired future.

5.2 Design Phase

The next phase in the Appreciative Inquiry process is the design phase. Browning (2014, p.777) defines the Design phase as bringing innovation and form to the participants' dreams. The Dream phase brought the elements of the organization into a future-focused mindset, and the participants were ready to give form to those dreams. The following section will outline the CEO interviews leading up to the Dream phase and how we transitioned to new leadership (Figure 26).

5.2.1 CEO Interviews and Hiring

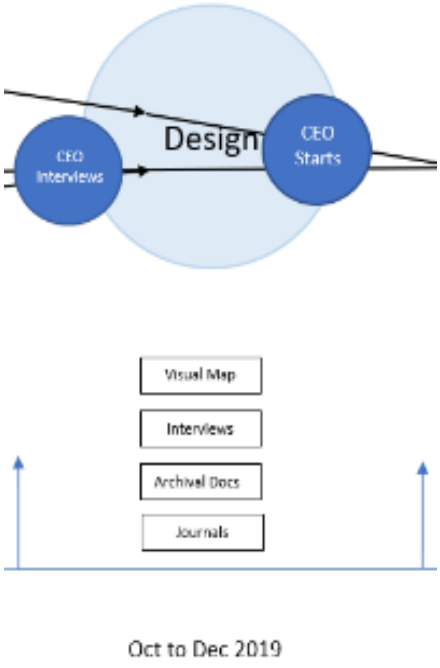


Figure 26 - Design Visual Map and Thematic Timeline for the CNUW

Having a long-term leader leaves the organization with poor financial and operational processes meant we only had one shot at hiring the right CEO. We wanted more than a professional recommending a professional; we wanted a recruiter who would take the time to learn our organization and then help us find the right person-culture fit O'Reilly III, C.A., Chatman, J. and Caldwell, D.F., 1991). By including the entire staff, the board chose to engage in collective leadership rather than relying on a centralized

approach. To ensure a whole system process, the recruiter made his first order of business, interviewing everyone to determine what the CNUW needed from a CEO. The recruiter started to interview board members and staff and used the themes from our Appreciative Inquiry phases to inform the creation of a spec sheet for the CEO position (Figure 15, p. 100). The spec sheet for the position (see Appendix D) focused on leadership, strategic planning, fund development, donor relationship management, community investment, staff and operations management, and program management. All characteristics were consistent with the themes that emerged from the first two phases, Discovery and Dream and UWW specifications (see Appendices H, I, J).

I created a panel of questions with the input of the board members and staff using Schein's pure, diagnostic, and confrontive inquiry (Coghlan, 2019)(see Appendix F). We designed the interview questions to focus on the candidate's ability to run a business and be connected to the community. Traditionally the executive director (ED)/CEO was selected by the president of the executive committee. However, in case studies where leaders hired a CEO unilaterally, by engaging in centralized leadership and agency-based behaviours, gaps between the staff and CEO appeared quickly, taking more time to resolve issues (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Therefore, the board chose collective leadership over centralized leadership and a whole system process by including all participants in the hiring process. During the Discovery meeting and several meetings afterwards, we discussed the qualities of a new CEO. Within the Discovery meeting, the values listed in the centre of the visual map gave us the beginning blueprint of the CEO, including inspiration, vision, the leadership of the staff, and high-level interactions with stakeholders (Figure 27).

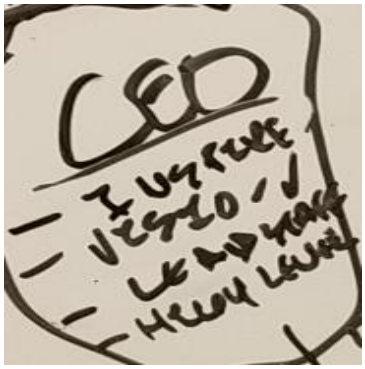


Figure 27 - CEO and Internal Processes – Excerpt from Visual Map

We decided to break the interviews into two panels. One focused on the community interests; the other focused on business or operational understanding we labelled as professional interests (see Appendix F). Professional interests related to an internal focus on the organization. In contrast, community interests focused on the agencies and organizations external to the organization. By focusing on these two general interests in our interviews, we intended a holistic approach to assessing the candidates by covering the breadth of our external contacts. The board members also arranged themselves according to preference. The professional panel consisted mainly of members with a basis in private enterprise, and community members had experience in public administrative roles. As a final interview, we scheduled a meeting with the staff and two Board members, me and one other. By scheduling this final interview, we intended to reinforce the whole system process of AI in hiring the CEO.

The choices we made to navigate the recruiting and hiring of the new CEO included collective leadership, a focus on performance over conformance, and leveraging our internal processes to clarify how best to leverage our external stakeholders. Consistent with a stewardship approach to running the organization, we had successfully navigated the tensions to achieve a whole systems approach to completing our leadership team. We successfully hired a new CEO, of whom both the board and the staff approved and met our criteria. Next, we focused on preparing for the Design Meeting.

5.2.2 Preparing for the Design Meeting

On December 18th, we scheduled the Design meeting and planned the introduction of our new CEO. In the map for the Dream phase (Figure 20, p. 109), the three financial state issues, board transformation, leadership transition, were still on different paths. We saw that the Board Transformation and Leadership Transition lines converged to become one. The convergence was due to the alignment of the board and staff to select the CEO unanimously. By choosing to lead collectively, all participants were committed to choosing and selecting the CEO through a holistic approach, a result that would not have been likely before the Appreciative Inquiry process. Having hired a new CEO and restructured our finance, we were ready to take the map we created in the Discovery phase, apply the

themes from the Dream phase, and engage in the design phase. To facilitate this, I processed the hand-drawn visual map's raw data into a digital visual map (Figure 28).

5.2.3 Visual Map of the CNUW

In the Dream stage of the 4 D process of Appreciative Inquiry, the organization members attempt to define the organization at its best. The Dream phase can result in some graphical representation (Boje et al., 2011). In the Dream phase, that graphical representation is the table of revenue topics based in the current state and inspiration topics based in a future state. Using the visual map (Figure 11, p. 94) we created from the Discovery phase, we would continue to clarify and elaborate on the internal and external processes of the CNUW in the Design phase. To get a better image of the map, I converted it into a digital form (Figure 28). Arrows in the drawing represent relationships between concepts, events, or assets. The large circle represents the boundaries of the CNUW, and the area within the circle represents internal processes and themes. In contrast, the areas outside the circle represent external processes or themes. The blue squares represent external stakeholders whom the CNUW engages. The grey squares represent the internal assets of the organization. The arrows describe what the participants see and how the blue and grey squares interact with each other. Two-way relationships are represented by double-ended arrows, while one-way relationships have a single end with an arrow. Some of the arrows have descriptions to detail the nature of the relationships. The themes that emerged from creating the map include the floating words inside and outside of the circle. Themes such as dedication, growth, and family-oriented were crucial to participants' understanding of the culture in both the Discovery and Dream phases. Themes within the circle are a combination of what culture existed and what they wanted to achieve in a future state. Themes outside of the circle represent how the organization appears to external stakeholders. The primary theme was 'brand', defined as our identity as our external stakeholders perceive it. We also identified the brand in the Dream phase as being 'better known to the community', indicating a connection between Discovery and Dream phase themes. The yellow pentagon in the map centre represents the processes and characteristics critical to the internal assets interacting. We used the values in the pentagon to identify the core critical processes of the CNUW, outlining how the participants viewed the organization and

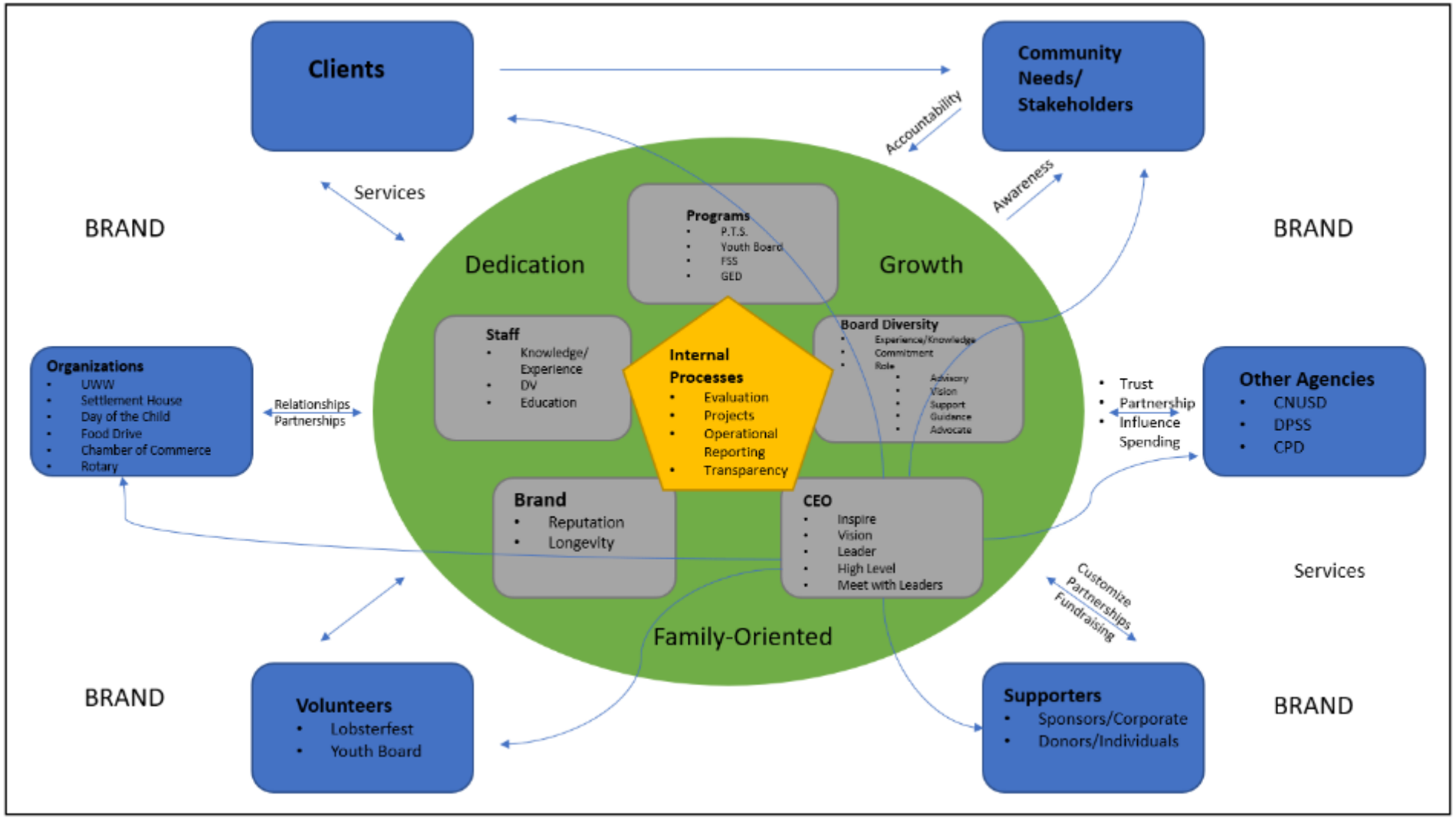


Figure 28 - Visual Map of the CNUW

thereby defining the characteristics crucial for a CEO to possess. The resulting visual map took large amounts of raw data and organized it in a small, easily understood format (Langley, 1999). Having a clear map of the organization paved the way for the next stage of our work, the Design Meeting. To prepare for the meeting, I created a set of Design Phase Summary Instructions (see Appendix G) containing the revised visual map (see Figure 29) and presented them in an email before the meeting. We also printed the documents and handed them out in the meeting. Hiring the CEO between phases proved serendipitous. For efficiency, we combined the Design meeting with our annual holiday dinner, the new CEO's introduction, and recognition for our staff.

5.2.4 Design Meeting

We began the meeting by formally introducing the new CEO, spending time over a meal, and getting to know each other better. Eating together was inspired by the cultural theme of 'family-oriented' we identified in the Discovery phase and was less of a planned tactic than a natural meeting setting. We had holiday dinners before, but this was the first time we included the entire staff. The tension was palpable as all the participants entered the room. Participants made comments like 'I'm so nervous, we've never been this close to the entire board before' and 'we're not sure where to sit, and do we shake hands?'. Non-verbal cues emerged, such as the staff and board members staying in groups on opposite ends of the long table. From my journals, I recorded feeling 'surprised that there was such a distance between the staff and the board'. I realized that they had usually spent very brief interactions in a controlled office setting on their terms. This was new, and the new context contained uncertainty. The new CEO moved between the two groups acting as a liaison. I recorded in my personal journal that it was 'interesting how the behaviours of the new CEO reflected a collective leadership role as she worked hard to bring the groups together.'

The tension within the room eased as the staff acclimated to being in proximity to the board of directors. Specifically, the nonverbals of the staff were evident as they began the evening very stiff and just speaking with each other but started to speak with the board members and changed seating, so they were sitting in between them. They also started to share their thoughts related to the organization rather than acting in a subordinate role. Comments began to surface, such as 'We feel that a focus on revenues would allow us

to have the resources we need to serve those in need' and 'we do not always feel like our voices are included in the decision-making processes.' The open sharing and trust that the participants showed in this phase allowed us to engage in a whole system process. We then proceeded to review the instructions for the Design activity.

The Design activity was a review of the materials we had designed in the past phases of Discovery and Dream. The first two phases created a basis for our Design phase in the form of the processed visual map (Figure 29). We leveraged a similar format to the Discovery and Dream meetings, and the participants split into pairs and discussed the map. I encouraged the participants to choose pairings that they had not interacted in before during the previous two phases to get the newest combinations possible. The intention was to get more participants to interview each other in new combinations to increase the diversity of interactions. Immediately the pairs started to form, and then there was an interruption. The CEO stopped me in the middle of delivering the instructions and said, 'Am I the only one who is confused? I am not sure what we are doing here'.

In reflecting on my journal notes, I was taken aback by the CEO's reaction. We had discussed the activity before the meeting and aligned on what we would be doing. However, in the meeting setting, the CEO had read nonverbal and verbal cues that not everyone was on the same page. By interrupting for clarification, the CEO quickly became the centre of attention. As I explained what we were doing, it became clear that the board and participants responded to the CEO's actions with nods and comments like 'yeah, I'm not sure what we were doing. I'm glad you spoke up.' And 'I don't usually know what we are doing, but I go along, and it makes sense by the end.'. An interesting shift occurred at this point in the power dynamics within the group. I deferred to the CEO and asked them to explain what they thought we should be doing at that moment.

While the intention was to add to the visual map, the pairs interacted differently. Instead of breaking into pairs and interacting individually using the prepared materials (Appendix G), there was a great deal of crosstalk. Much of this involved the new CEO, who interacted with multiple participants at once. I saw the core board members (those most active in governance) gravitate toward the CEO immediately. Slowly the conversation grew to include all participants, and we were back in a group meeting openly discussing the critical priorities for the organization. The CEO clarified at this moment,

‘So what I am hearing is that we need to focus on money? Or focus on increasing revenues?’. There was a great deal of excitement over their statement, and one board member said, ‘Yes! And to do that, we need to have a brand, brand awareness.’ There was again general agreement with this from the rest of the participants. Next, a board member added, ‘It is crucial that we connect to the community and that they know who we are, but also what services we provide. How we contribute to the community.’ From this interaction, the CEO summarized that the most important things we focus on in updating the strategic plan were Revenue, Community, and Brand. Though the conversation did not go the way we had planned, there was a very powerful emergent quality that provided the outcome for the Design phase and a path forward.

In my journals, I noted that I felt the new CEO’s move was ‘an intuitive choice to assert centralized leadership’, potentially because centralized leadership was the CEO’s primary tool in their prior role Arnold, K.A., Loughlin, C. and Walsh, M.M., 2016). I decided not to interfere as the CEO took over a central leadership role because I recognized that the transfer of leadership, in this case, was happening naturally (Davis et al., 1997; Hilsen, 2006). In contrast, I had anticipated a much more elaborate plan. This more organic form accomplished two things. First, it solidified the CEO as the new leader of the organization. Second, as the President of the Board, it allowed me to adopt a facilitation role more in line with my role as a scholar-practitioner. Thereby resolving a duality issue, a role issue, and a leadership transition issue all in one moment.

The participants quickly reacted by following the lead of the new CEO. The change in power dynamics within the meeting brought a few insights into clear focus. First, the board was still engaged in centralized leadership when navigating the tension indicated by the participants deferring to the hierarchical structure. Second, I became acutely aware that as the President of the Board, I was also engaging in centralized behaviour though attempting to facilitate from a collective leadership perspective. Finally, since the participants quickly deferred to the CEO, I also recognized that it would be better to defer than engage in a power struggle.

5.2.5 Design Summary

In the Design phase, we used the visual map and the Dream topics to generate the most critical themes. The convergence of the three highest priority challenges

(financial state, board transformation, and leadership transition) continued as we hired a recruiter, conducted interviews, and finally hired our new CEO. The Dream phase allowed the participants to finish the work that started in the Discovery phase by creating a vision of the ideal CEO. We also witnessed a transference of power as I navigated centralized and collective leadership tension while the new CEO established themselves in the organization. We left the Design phase with four major themes crafted and refined during the previous two phases: mission and values, revenues, brand, and community (Figure 29). We identified these themes throughout the phases, as shown in the visual map of the CNUW (Figure 11, p. 94) and the Dream topics (Figure 25, p. 117). The participants agreed unanimously that these themes should be the basis of our move towards revising our strategic plan (see Appendix K). Mission and Values, and Community are themes that require a collective leadership approach as we engage in our whole system approach, ensuring that all voices are heard, and commitment to the base values of the organization are present from the start (Block, 2011). They also require processes that interact internally and externally with the CNUW to achieve the infrastructure that will impact external awareness. Brand is almost completely external as it contains concepts such as reputation and awareness of stakeholders who do not have access or influence on the internal processes. Revenue is a mixture of processes and performance tensions and is the only theme that resides in the performance tension as it determines how we fund our operations and is the critical factor that determines if the CNUW survives. While Brand can be a measure of performance, it is ultimately still for the purpose of generating revenue to fund our operations. With the CEO position filled and a structure for the major themes for updating our strategic plan at hand, we moved on to the final phase, Destiny.

Design Outcomes	
Tensions	Themes
Collective	Mission and Values, Community
Performance	Revenue
Processes	Brand, Mission and Values, Community, Revenue

Figure 29 - Design Outcomes

5.2.6 Preparing for Destiny

After reflecting on the first three phases, several key findings are important to recognize. First, creating the visual map in the beginning phase of the Appreciative Inquiry was a critical step for creating a shared understanding of the organization. The use of visual mapping (Langley, 1999), combined with Higgin's 8S model (Higgins, 2005), and interviews based on Schein's levels of inquiry (Coghlan, 2019) created a rich picture (Monk and Howard, 1998) of our organization and how we understand it collectively. Second, as an outcome of the Discovery phase, the visual map also allowed us to process large amounts of data in an easily understood framework. The map facilitated the development of understanding the processes and related theories in a small space. Third, the map also allowed for a more abstract conceptualization of the organization, beyond its processes to the core values that make up our cause. The interactions we had revealed behaviours of our participants that became clearer in the context of agency and stewardship theories.

5.2.7 Moving From Design to Destiny

I established in the literature review that criticism of Appreciative Inquiry is that it tends to have a constructed feel to it. The question remains, do we see what we wanted to see? Being based on a constructionist epistemology, it is not hard to reach this conclusion. One of the primary criticisms of qualitative research in this mode is rigour and relevance. Since the beginning of the research project, I have used deductive reasoning for predicting which theories and literature would best suit the workplace problem. Abductive reasoning can provide another perspective that adds credibility to the results by identifying themes and comparing them to the theories and frameworks outlined in the literature review (Weick, 2006; Barton, J., Stephens, J. and Haslett, T., 2009; Johnston and Kortens, 2010). Additionally, inductive reasoning in the form of thematic coding can provide further insight into the inner workings of governance during the AI process (Gioia et al., 2012). Therefore, to mitigate criticisms of AI and qualitative research and further validate the project results, it makes sense to use abductive reasoning and inductive thematic coding in addition to deductive reasoning to provide further rigour and relevance for this project. I employed thematic coding and created a data structure using Nvivo 12 software.

As I indicated in the Methodology chapter, I processed archival documents, transcriptions from AI meetings, and personal journals in Nvivo 12. Subsequently, I produced a data structure based on research by Gioia et al. (2012). The resulting table processed the raw data of the first three phases of the Appreciative Inquiry process into first-order concepts, categorized into second-order themes and finally into second-order aggregate dimensions (Figure 30). When comparing the second-order aggregate dimensions to the literature review theories abductively, I found similar themes. At the same time, the dream phase revealed the three most critical themes for updating the strategic plan thematic analysis using the Nvivo 12 software, bringing to light another theme, Mission and Values (Figures 29 and 30).

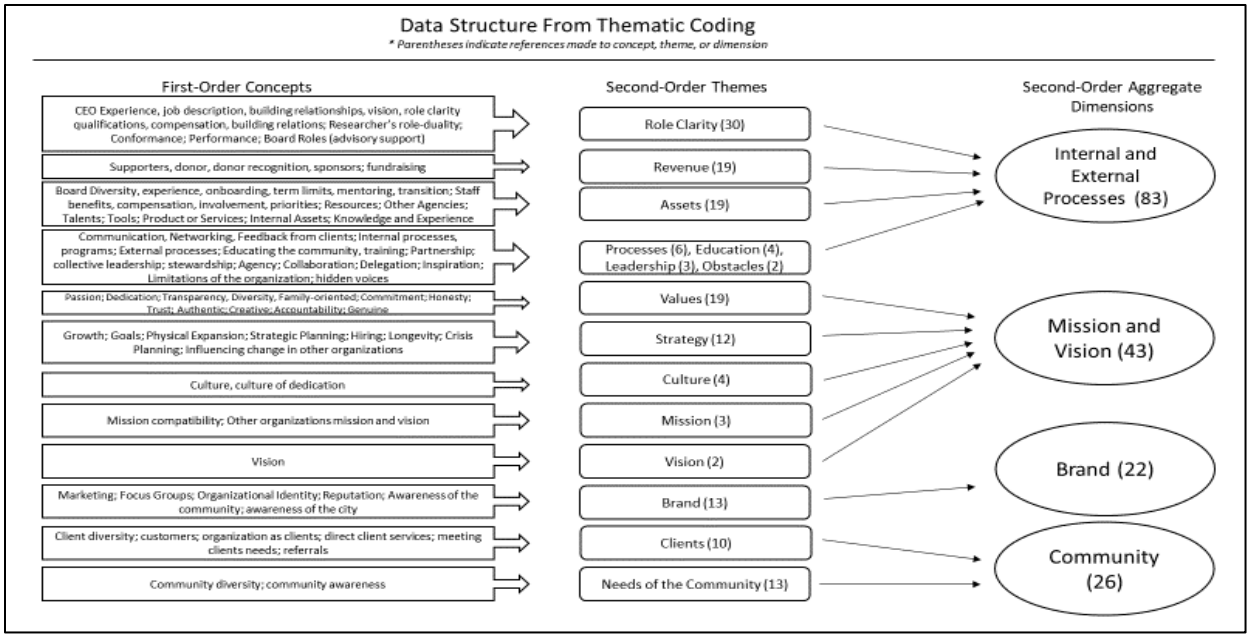


Figure 30 - Data Structure from Thematic Coding in Nvivo 12 (also see Appendix Q)

Mission and values had been a consistent theme throughout the project and occurring in all three phases. However, they represent more of an umbrella under which the organization operates. Internal and External processes are another emergent theme from the phases and the thematic coding. As I discovered in the literature review, researchers use internal and external processes to identify the difference between the organization and the surrounding ecology. Within the Discovery phase, I identified the

theme through visual mapping. In the Dream phase, the theme took the form of revenues and programs.

For instance, in the extant literature over multiple theoretical scenarios, I identified internal and external processes, which as a second-order aggregate dimension, links to eighty-three occurrences within the thematic coding of the raw data (see Appendix P). Whether described as boundaries, structure, ecology, or environments, organizational theories and frameworks refer to the interplay between internal and external processes and the complexity of navigating between them (Solomon and Huse, 2019; Jaskyte, 2018; Zhu et al., 2016; Filatotchev and Nakajima, 2010). Internal and External Processes emerged primarily in the Discovery phase and came up again during and between the phases. The appearance in the thematic coding provided further evidence that the themes are significant. Additionally, it represented one of the three tensions found in the extant literature and modelled in the frameworks I used to understand the problem. Therefore, it makes sense that this theme is relevant to the organization in updating the strategic plan.

Mission and Values also appeared in the extant literature Fairhurst, G.T., Jordan, J.M. and Neuwirth, K., 1997; Knutsen and Brower, 2010; Marios, 2006; Rhodes and Keogan, 2005). Mission and Values linked to forty-three occurrences (see Appendix P) within the coding process and was the second most referenced second-order aggregate dimension indicating its importance to the participants. Unlike Internal and External processes, Mission and Values relate to why the participants and the organization worked to serve the community. The values are linked primarily to the Dream phase. Community as a second-order aggregate dimension frequently appeared in the extant literature as one might expect concerning non-profit board governance (Phillips and Pittman, 2014; Miller, 2012; Thornton, P.H., Ocasio, W. and Lounsbury, M., 2015; Knutsen and Brower, 2010). Community, in this case, links to the interaction between the organization and the communities that we serve.

Brand, the final second-order aggregate dimension, was prevalent in the extant literature and the other themes (McWilliams and Siegel, 2011; Kozlenkova, I.V., Samaha, S.A. and Palmatier, R.W., 2014; Molloy, J.C., Chadwick, C., Ployhart, R.E., Gideon, S.J., 2011). In thematic coding, it appeared twenty-two times (see Appendix P) and focused

mainly on external processes and awareness. Concepts such as marketing and reputation were the focus with the intent of raising funds. The emergence of these themes in the thematic coding reinforces the rigour and relevance of the process. Linking the choices the participants have made to theories and frameworks in the extant literature, there is more assurance that the themes are the actual themes of the work and not constructs based on interpretation of the results. Therefore, we could move from theory to practice, from abstraction to practical application. We could bridge the theory-practice gap with confidence that the themes generated from the phases had rigour and relevance.

5.2.8 Summary

Through the Dream and Design phases of Appreciative Inquiry, we accomplished many things. First, we were able to change our mindsets from an internal focus on day-to-day operations in financial and leadership crises to a focus on a future vision of our strengths. A future where we are working collectively to ensure the organization's performance and balance internal and external processes. We accomplished this by leveraging our strengths and inspiration to envision our future. Second, using the topics and mindset from the Dream phase, we modified the visual map from the Discovery phase to create a digital visual map that aligned our understanding of the internal and external processes of the Corona Norco United Way. Finally, we refined our collective understanding of the visual map to agree upon the core themes that would influence how we updated our strategic plan: revenues, community, and brand. From the thematic coding analysis using archival documents, personal journals, and the data gathered from the phases, we were able to identify revenues as part of our internal and external processes and identify mission and values as a critical theme. Armed with our themes of internal and external processes, mission and values, brand, and community, we began the process to update the strategic plan and formalize our work in the Destiny phase.

6 Destiny

6.1 Introduction/Transition

In this chapter, I justify and explain the transition from Design to Destiny and analyse our work to formalize the project in this final stage. As I established in the methodology chapter, a unique characteristic of Appreciative Inquiry is the transition from abstract concepts to practical application during the phases. During this transition, much of the criticism about the rigour and relevance of this mode of qualitative research occurs. Therefore, to add rigour to the project's methodology, I followed the framework created by Tenkasi and Hay (2004) to understand the theory and practice mediators for a successful organization project to explain better and justify moving from abstract concepts to practical application.

In the first three phases, I relied mostly upon Project Definition and Project Execution from the framework. In the Destiny Phase, we move to Project Realization (Tenkasi and Hay, 2004). In the following sections, I discuss and analyse the events leading up to the Destiny phase and the steps we took to finally reach the end of our project, the updated strategic plan. I also discuss the project's outcome, the strategic plan itself, and how it connected to our Appreciative Inquiry process, the events, and the convergence of the three key issues we tracked throughout the project. Finally, I discuss the limitations of the study and the future implications for this work. First, I address the three major issues identified at the outset and how they converged into one Destiny phase issue.

6.2 Financial State, Board Transformation, Leadership Transition

I have tracked three major issues throughout the project: financial state, board transformation, and leadership transition. Those three issues converge into one track during the Destiny phase (Figure 31). Originally, I defined these three issues as individual and needing attention at different levels. I realized that the three problems were related to a greater extent than I had first thought. I discovered that making progress on one issue provided solutions for other issues. I also realized that the three issues were symptoms of larger leadership issues that stemmed from navigating tensions identified in the literature.

Figure 31 - Destiny Map and Timeline for the Corona Norco United Way

For example, the financial state of the CNUW was a result of a disconnect between the Board of directors and the prior ED. When we began investigating audit results and financial reporting, we discovered that the financial accounting was sub-standard and moved to bring the financial state back into conformance with GAAP standards and UWW guidelines. We had over-indexed on a performance role and believed we had satisfied the directors' conformance role. Before and immediately after the ED's resignation, the coding from archival documents such as minutes from formal board meetings confirms a consistent focus on performance in every meeting within a 12-month cycle with recurring revenue themes such as fundraising, donors, and income concerns related to growth. My personal journal also reflects the consistent reoccurrence of these themes. After the resignation, coding revealed a shift to conformance topics such as audits, accountability, and accountability to communities.

We found that there needed to be a balance between the two roles facilitated by regular evaluation of the financial state from both perspectives. We realized that the separate issues were symptoms of the imbalance that occurred as we reacted to the crisis. Rather than strategizing our future through intentional navigation of the tensions,

we resorted to our understandings of handling the crisis, creating multiple streams of leadership, roles, and processes. A strong connection emerged between a performance role and external processes and a conformance role and internal processes. The connections are consistent with agency theory and its conformance focus and stewardship theory with its performance focus. Therefore, it makes sense that intentionally choosing stewardship behaviours related to the tensions of roles, leadership, and balance between internal and external processes led to the convergence of these issues.

At this point, a further major development during the project was the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic had significant implications for non-profits in general, so it is crucial to outline how the Corona Norco United Way environment changed. In the next section, I discuss the financial and community impacts of this development.

6.3 The Impact of COVID-19

6.3.1 Finances

The CNUW had a strained financial situation to begin with after the internal obstacles we faced over the last two years. Suddenly, we found ourselves in an even more precarious situation as our primary fundraising method (campaign contributions) became unstable. Traditionally we had two phases of fundraising throughout the year. We spent the first half of the year on national campaigns and the second half on local or regional small businesses. These smaller local businesses made up most of our unrestricted funds and gave us a great deal of flexibility to customize how we meet the community's needs. Unfortunately, since local businesses were impacted the most by closures, we lost a great deal of our flexibility and off-cycle funding. As a result, we needed to find new sources of revenue for our short-term survival.

COVID-19 changed the environment in which we did the campaigning for the second half of our fiscal year in several ways. First, China's crisis as they dealt with the virus caused markets to shrink. Local businesses started to become wary of economic prospects, especially if the virus spread and markets reacted. Therefore, everybody was a little less willing to donate to local organizations. Second, as the virus showed up locally and businesses started to close, we could not make cold calls or show up at a meeting to

present our case for philanthropy. Third, workers got sick or were exposed and needed time off to recover or self-quarantine, causing smaller paychecks and financial crises for donors. Fourth, national chains started to modify hours of operations which lowered the number of workers needed resulting in smaller paychecks. People could not afford to donate in that environment. We had yet to feel the fourth factor's full brunt as funding from the national campaigns is spread out over time during the next few years. Lastly, the number of families with critical needs started to climb during this period significantly, especially for our Family Support Services program. Our clients suffering from abuse were now trapped at home with their abusers, and the ways they could escape became very limited. The situation was compounded by high unemployment and reduced office hours, which eventually led to us closing the office and working behind the scenes to help clients at a distance. Initially, the pandemic appeared to be a precipitating event for the permanent closure of the Corona Norco United Way.

Cooperrider and Fry (2020) comment that the pandemic might initially feel like a poor fit for AI; however, this is exactly the environment when AI can be the most impactful. Cooperrider and Fry's (2020) assertion resonated with our findings as navigating the pandemic provided a few surprises. An unanticipated positive aspect of the situation was that grants became our main source of potential funding. The number of grants for communities rose from March to August from federal, national, and local organizations. Individual donors also stepped up to provide relief for communities. For example, one private donor donated over one million dollars to the United Ways that covered the Inland Valleys for San Bernardino and Riverside counties' service areas. The funds were restricted; however, the restrictions lined up with the CNUW mission, and we could distribute the funds.

The real surprise came in the number of grants that became available to us. We had considerably more resources because of COVID-19, and the skill sets that our new CEO possessed. The CEO proved adept at navigating internal and external processes by reorganizing the CNUW and applying externally for grants. The external processes became complicated as they had to field new grants and funding from outside sources simultaneously. The CEO had to navigate conformance and performance roles as they

broke new ground for the CNUW and did not have clear direction from the UWW. The choice to move in this new direction proved to be an excellent one. The new CEO applied for grants and secured over one hundred thousand dollars in grants in the first three months. That number grew to over five hundred thousand dollars in the first six months, more than tripling the income we received from non-national campaign donations and grants the year before.

The influx of money was beyond expectations. Our new CEO proved to be just the right person for the job in these circumstances. Instead of reactionary agency-based behaviours, which had served other United Ways poorly, we were able to collectively focus on performance and how the new CEO would affect internal and external processes. When the CEO started in their role, the board could make a collective choice when considering the CEO's agency by deferring to centralized leadership for the CEO. The different levels at which the tension of centralized or collective leadership occurred is a prime example of how the continuum between centralized and collective leadership is not singular in its track or linear in nature. Therefore, a unique outcome of this project was how Appreciative Inquiry allowed us to make intentional collective decisions when hiring the CEO and how it led to the right leader fit to help us navigate the pandemic successfully.

6.3.2 Board Meetings

Another major change during the pandemic was how we interacted. This change occurred when we transitioned to virtual board meetings as of March 25th, 2020. Our regular board meetings were quite adaptable to the virtual environment as we had a strong communication system and agenda building. However, there were some technological challenges as the board members dramatically increased their knowledge and use of virtual videoconferencing software to meet. Immediately after we put restrictions in place, we started meeting virtually. In June, we discussed meeting physically but decided against it because we wanted to proceed with an abundance of caution, even with the social distancing protocols. One of the incidental benefits of the virtual environment is that decorum is easier to achieve. We found that we needed to

have a structured approach to dialogue, and I found myself much more firmly in the role of a facilitator, which I will reflect more on in the final chapter of the thesis.

Two obstacles encountered while meeting in the virtual environment included communication and physical connection. Communication did improve to a certain extent because the environment required facilitation. However, there was a considerable loss of other forms of communication that videoconferencing does not convey well. Non-verbal communication is different in a video conference as the participants must maintain positions in the frame and have a camera view of themselves. Body posture was much more homogenous. Though the participants maintained their styles, such as how they leaned in a chair, facial and head movements, the environment they were all in was different. A shared environment was common in our board meetings and was designed to keep us focused on each other and the topics. The case was very different virtually. Multiple times the participants had pets, spouses, children, and co-workers interrupt their video conference. The ability to work off-frame on other things without the rest of the participants also added distractions and control to the interaction. In one meeting, the staff and CEO were on a shared computer as they had chosen to undergo testing and sequester as a unit to continue operations. They muted their microphone but left their video stream on and started to have a conversation of their own. The other participants pointed out the interruption and asked the CEO to ‘turn the microphone back to include the rest of us’.

Interestingly, this was further evidence of the new stewardship behaviours we had adopted. The board members were adamant that we ‘stay on the same topic and not have separate conversations’. The commitment to the whole system process was evident at this moment. These additional circumstances required a great deal of collective decision-making as we worked together to adjust. Overall, we were able to navigate the new factors and continue with the project unimpeded. The final event in the timeline leading up to the Destiny phase was the reorganization of the Corona Norco United Way regarding the staff and reporting relationships. In the next section, I set the stage for the Destiny meeting and how we updated our strategic plan.

6.3.3 Reorganization

The reorganization of the CNUW is significant because it completely changes the way the staff interacted, moving from traditional structures and roles to a new structure based on our growing understanding of stewardship. The interim executive director (IED) was in place through the CEO's first ninety days and presented several challenges. First, they were resistant to the CEO's introduction despite having been involved in the entire process. The resistance was potentially due to feeling threatened by a new leader. Second, with the new CEO in place, the IED reverted to their former position as the Community Impact Manager (CIM). However, as the IED transitioned back into the position, they retained their positional power by remaining the direct supervisor of the staff. Essentially, they retained positional authority and acted as a gateway between the new CEO and the staff.

After the first sixty days, the new CEO concluded that the organizational structure was not conducive to our program-based operation. By flattening out the structure and having all the staff report directly to the CEO, they could clear up the communication problems. The CEO also managed the Community Impact Manager's performance and ultimately found that the employment relationship could not continue. After the former IED left the organization, the extent of the resistance became clear, and the staff and CEO could forge a closer bond. The reorganization represented the final stage in resolving the financial state by reducing payroll and easing a large burden on the month-to-month cash flow of the organization. Additionally, the path for communication and alignment between the board and the staff became clear. We were able to work with them both to progress to our final stages of updating the strategic plan. The unique contribution of this event is twofold. First, a look into the inner workings of a transfer of power among leadership and staff can be generalized to other organizations planning or struggling with a change in leadership. Second, understanding the factors the CEO had to deal with during such a transition allowed us to understand the organization's internal processes better. Having reorganized the CNUW, we began our preparation for the Destiny meeting.

6.4 Preparation for Destiny Meeting

From the outset of the AI process, I intended to take a holistic or Whole-System approach with the project (Block, 2011; Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney and Trosten-Bloom, 2010). All participants would need to be involved in accomplishing this approach. For the first three phases, involving all participants was simple. We invited them to the meetings, gave instructions and objectives, and worked to develop our current state, vision for the future, and design how we would get there. The strengths-based approach to the project made a hopeful dialogue about the future quite easy to engage. The tensions provided most of the challenges, navigating choosing performance over conformance, collective action over centralized leadership, and understanding how our internal processes affected external relationships. The difference was that we had many conversations leading up to this point where we could make choices concerning the tensions, aware that we were making them. Before this stage, we spent much time understanding the types of choices we were making and how they affected the organization, staff, CEO, and internal and external stakeholders to the CNUW. Also, the conversations we had before this stage represented more abstract concepts. However, the Destiny phase began a more practical application of the themes and concepts we discussed. The implementation's challenge became apparent beginning with the CEO's reaction to the existing Strategic planning Process.

6.4.1 CEO – Board President Relationship

Part of the pre-work that I included from the United Way Worldwide referred specifically to the relationship between the CEO and the board of directors. The CEO-board relationship was also a more recent focus in non-profit board governance literature (Cornforth and Macmillan, 2016; Tacon et al., 2017; Shen, 2003; Donaldson and Davis, 1991). The research would prove helpful as the CEO and I navigated a reflexive cycle between the Design and Destiny phases. Over the next several meetings, the CEO and I navigated centralized versus collective leadership and conformance versus performance roles by aligning in the organization's internal and external status and aligning on a path forward.

The CEO and I alternately emailed (see Appendix M), spoke on the phone, or on Zoom calls to discuss the existing strategic plan (Appendix K) and what updating it could achieve. A crucial lesson for me from this period was that the events and internal processes we discussed had multiple 'truths'. The CEO commented several times that they wish they were told the 'truth' initially. In my personal journals, I captured how I was ‘perplexed by this comment.’ I felt that I was ‘very transparent’, and the comment was that information was intentionally withheld. I also found myself a bit defensive as the CEO implied subterfuge from my perspective. We discussed this comment, and I understood that the information provided to the CEO was incomplete from their perspective. It was not until this part of the process that I realized that the complete story came from multiple perspectives, from the board, the CEO, and the staff. In other words, the complete story would only come from a collective process. Having established the context, we realized that at least two more perspectives remained to consider for the work. That of the external stakeholders and the clients we serve. Ultimately, we were able to develop a framework for the pre-work resulting in a first rough draft of the strategic plan update from the CEO considering its context.

The following week, the CEO sent me an email to recap our strategy session and thoughts on how an update to the strategic plan might look. At this time, the actions we took involved multiple cycles of diagnosing, planning, acting, and evaluating as we emailed back and forth ideas. The co-creation was energizing. After a call for clarification, the CEO and I had a better understanding of how we wanted to proceed with the AI process's final phase. Next, we engaged in multiple cycles of diagnosing, planning, acting, and evaluating using the data we had collected from the coding and phases distilled into our critical themes. Finally, we drafted pre-work for the Destiny phase using the Data Structure from Thematic Coding (see Appendix N). However, a structure was still necessary to help practically frame the themes. Therefore, we leaned on the CEO's experience from their prior employment and referred to a public government institution's sample strategic plan (Figure 32).

STAFFING	
GOAL 1:	Ensure adequate staffing levels for all department divisions and functions
Objective 1A	Identify staffing needs for all divisions and functions
Start Date	FY 2017-18
Timeframe	24 months
Critical Tasks	**1.A.1** Conduct analysis of mission critical tasks of all divisions and functions **1.A.2** Conduct analysis of mission supportive tasks of all divisions and functions **1.A.3** Identify staffing plan for all divisions and functions, with an emphasis on staffing four-person truck companies with ALS capabilities
Assigned To	Deputy Fire Chief- Administration
Performance Measure	**1.** Analysis completed
Funding Estimate	Services ($) 5,000
Objective 1B	Staff all divisions and functions consistent with the developed staffing plan
Start Date	FY 2017-18
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	**1.B.1** Incorporate staffing plan and associated costs into annual budget submittal **1.B.2** Hire, train, and bring online any newly hired staff **1.B.3** Annually review Standards of Cover and staffing plan **1.B.4** Incorporate any annual adjustments and associated justifications into annual budget submittal
Assigned To	Fire Chief
Performance Measure	**1.** Recommendations presented to City Council
Funding Estimate	Personnel ($) 400,000

Figure 32 - Excerpt from the City of Riverside Fire Department 2017-2022 Strategic plan

In the excerpt, we labelled the Staffing category as an ‘area of focus’ and kept goals and objectives as they were. The bold heading 'Staffing' outlines the umbrella under which action-based specifics would fall. As discussed, during the thematic coding and the Design phase, four themes emerged: Internal and external processes, Mission and Values, Brand, and Community. These codes were present in the archival documents and the interviews conducted in the first three phases. Also, these codes reiterated the language found in the literature review. Therefore, I proposed that we use codes as a starting place for our work by introducing results to the participants and engaging in collective dialogue to reach a consensus.

We designed the next categories to add specifics for the area of focus determined at the top. For example, the structure distils the 'Staffing' header using goals that specify staffing actions, establishing defined and measurable goals for the organization or people

be assigned to the objectives. The 'objectives' then described specific actions to take in accomplishing the goals. The sample also defined multiple concepts at different levels of our internal process. The outcome of our research to this point would guide the area of focus (i.e., staffing) and the collective efforts of all the participants in our Destiny phase. Finally, we determined that the objectives portion of the strategic plan would be operational and reserved for tactical planning involving the CEO and staff. Essentially, we decided to focus on the "What" of the strategic plan at the board of directors' level and get the staff to focus on the "How" objectives. The pre-work we drafted would become the starting point of our final phase (see Appendix L).

6.4.2 Review of Pre-Work

During the regular Board meeting on June 24th, 2020, we reviewed the pre-work that we had designed collectively with all the participants. We intended to define the project and familiarize the participants with the work we would be doing in the next session. We also wanted to give them time to think through the focus areas and related goals we would like to incorporate into the strategic plan. The preparation email included the documents from my discussion with the CEO and the existing strategic plan. In addition, we asked the following questions to generate insight:

1. What was completed? What is left to be done?
2. What worked? What did not?
3. What do we keep? Leave behind?
4. What will an effective strategic plan look like to guide the CNUW for the next 3 to 5 years?

The questions followed the same structure we used for semi-structured interviews in the earlier phases following Schein's Dynamics of Helping (Coghlan, 2019) from the area of confrontative Inquiry. We designed the questions to create a reflexive internal session for the participants outside of the group discussion to practice the process we had been going through. The overview was walking through the categories slide by slide.

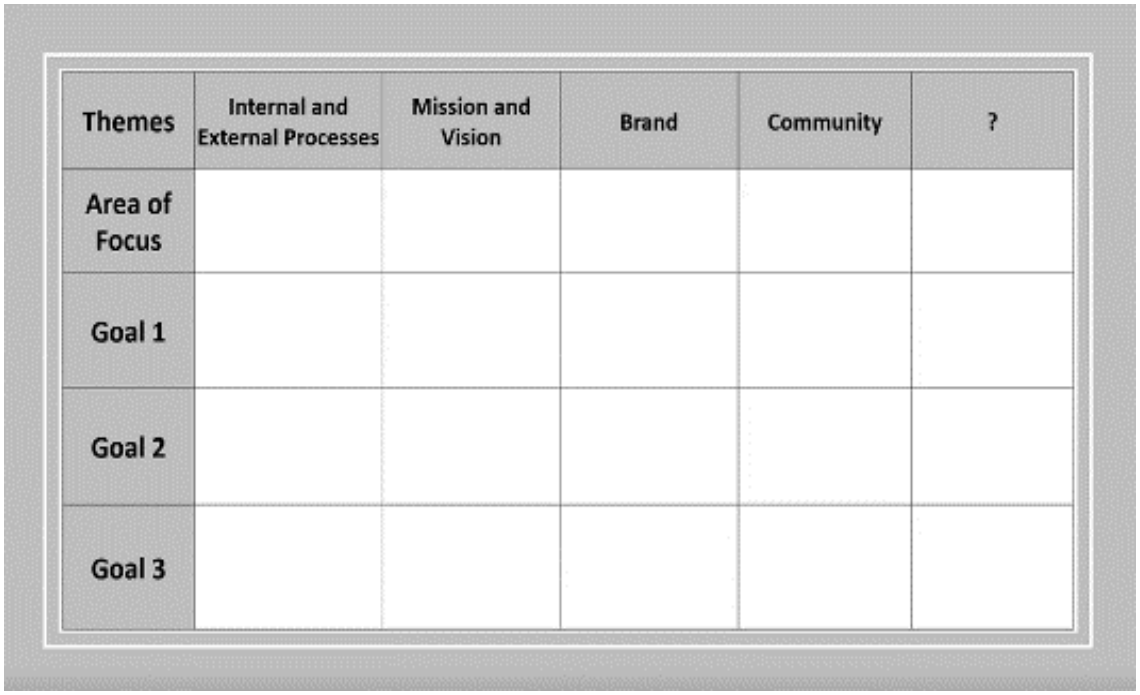
We found a lack of alignment among the participants and many different aspects of the process. The major concepts were familiar to all, but how we would complete the process was unclear. Participants made comments like 'what are we doing with the

themes?' and 'these objectives don't seem to be related to the work we need to do.' I recorded in my personal journal that I was 'surprised that there was still a lack of clarity.' We went through quite a bit of pre-work and effort to include everyone, but there was still confusion. The misalignment was not unprecedented, however, and can be a result of the process, not necessarily a sign of a broken process (Grieten et al., 2018; Cooperrider et al., 2008). Essentially, the task of connecting the conceptual to the practical was now before us reminiscent of the theory-practice gap that has been well-documented in the extant literature (Tenkasi and Hay, 2004; Lee and Greenley, 2010; Höglund et al., 2018). Using Tenkasi and Hay's model as a baseline, we moved the participants through project definition during our pre-work session using the deck we created. There were several weeks between this session and the first part of our Destiny phase meetings. I instructed the participants to take the time between meetings to think through the dialogue and prepare themselves for the conversation. We agreed to all come together for the next meeting prepared to focus on updating the strategic plan.

6.5 Destiny Meeting part 1

The Destiny meeting was scheduled for ninety minutes and was a virtual format using the Zoom videoconferencing software. The attendees included all the participants from the project, comprised of the staff, CEO and board of directors. We began where we had left off in the last meeting by going over the pre-work deck (see Appendix L). I acted as a facilitator in this meeting, running the presentation on the Zoom call. The CEO acted as a facilitator for the staff as they were taking the call together. The CEO prepared to answer questions and bridge any gaps as they came to understand the materials. After a quick refresher on the materials, we opened the dialogue for questions on the materials we had provided or answers to the questions that we had posed.

Figure 33 illustrates the form we used to begin the conversation. The participants asked if we ‘could start with either brand or community since they were having a tough time wrapping their heads around internal and external processes.’ Upon reflection, I recorded in my personal journal that the difficulty came from a one-sided perspective, knowing only the organization's internal processes. I realized that external processes were not a concrete concept for the staff. Participants made comments like ‘we usually don’t talk to them, that was the executive director or the community impact manager’. By choosing centralized leadership, the ED and CIM had isolated the staff from external stakeholders and limited their perspective to their own experiences.



Themes	Internal and External Processes	Mission and Vision	Brand	Community	?
Area of Focus					
Goal 1					
Goal 2					
Goal 3					

Figure 33 – Form for Dialogue on Areas of Focus, Goals, and Objectives for updating the Strategic plan

The choice of topic was fortunate, and the CEO placed their feed on mute and engaged in conversation while interacting with the whiteboard on camera. One of the other participants identified this separate activity and asked the CEO to ‘please unmute their feed so we could be a part of their conversation’. The staff stated, ‘we were part of a 'brainstorming' session, but we are not familiar with anything that had happened since then’. The statement sparked considerable confusion among the board members. One board member stated, ‘They have been at every meeting.’ I also confirmed for the CEO

and for the staff that ‘you have been present for every meeting’, and I outlined each meeting and what we accomplished, referring to the visual map, the dream topics, and the themes from the Design phase.

The CEO worked with them, explaining where we were in the process and how they could participate and had in the past. I continued to reinforce that the staff had been a part of the Appreciative Inquiry process from the beginning. The CEO confirmed that they had been able to clarify what we were doing on the call. The CEO also focused the staff on the objectives based on the areas of focus and goals produced, so I clarified that we ‘were producing them together on that call’. With everyone on the same page, we began our work. The first area of focus we addressed was brand.

Brand emerged from the thematic coding based on twenty-two occurrences related to thirteen second-order codes (see Appendix Q). Brand occurred as a topic of interest from the beginning of the project and perpetuated throughout the process—the most frequent codes associated with brand involved reputation, community awareness, and marketing concerns. A board member led off by connecting the brand to community awareness and media presence. They referred to 'telling our own story.’ Another board member brought up brand identity and our marketing committee's work when creating the strategic plan and our current state. The personal experience came into play as the board member related to how their public agency had a similar problem.

They recommended having a dedicated person for advertising and marketing. We constantly navigated moving between focus areas, goals, and objectives fluidly and began to define the differences as we conversed. Though we had many conversations leading up to this meeting defining roles, we found that putting the concepts into practice still required dialogue. An example came up early in the brand conversation as we talked about marketing and advertising brands. As the participants gave feedback, I entered the information live into the presentation, so we had an aligned view of how our conversation progressed (Figure 34). The CEO continued to talk about the Board of directors, setting the goals and the staff coming up with the objectives. We made sense of the discussion

by discussing the 'what' (focus area and goals) and the 'how' (objectives) of the strategic plan.

Themes	Internal and External Processes	Mission and Vision	Brand	Community	?
Area of Focus	Fundraising Fiscal Sustainability	Discover New Areas of Need		Community Programs that impact health, income, and education	Board Development
Goal 1 Sustainability of the Organization	Increase Campaign Revenues- 1 year	Mission of the CNUW	- Marketing - Create our own press - Tell our own Story - Consistent Media Presence - Purpose	Homelessness – 1 year Affordable Housing (prevention) Jobs Transformation	
Goal 2	Design Grant Writing Program- 1 year		Build a Social Media Presence	Domestic Violence – 1 year	
Goal 3			Brand Awareness in the Community	Income Education – 1 year	

Figure 34 – Outcome from Dialogue on Areas of Focus, Goals, and Objectives for updating the Strategic plan

The participants transitioned from Brand to Funding by connecting how one affects the other. Another participant talked about how the brand affects the community and vice versa. The staff and CEO weighed in on the brand and said that Community Impact was the focus area, and the brand was part of it. However, a board member argued the need to keep them separate. The crucial interaction in this exchange was how the participants negotiated meaning and priorities as we moved through the topics while staying focused on external processes. Internal processes had become much less of a concern in the conversation. I attribute this to confidence gained in the staff and CEO. The alignment of terms started to become the most important part of the dialogue. Participants shared power in defining the areas of focus, tending toward collective leadership rather than centralized leadership. While these conversations occurred, an interesting dynamic was how an overall collective atmosphere kept any attempts to move towards centralized leadership in check. As board members wanted to talk about the focus area's logistics rather than staying focused on how our vision translates, others would remind us how we needed to stay at the right altitude. The CEO would also reinforce this stance and claim

the internal processes as their own while accepting feedback and reassuring that they would address the internal processes with the staff. In this sense, the CEO was exhibiting both collective and centralized leadership simultaneously. Collective towards the Board of directors and the external processes and centralized towards the internal processes and the staff. Staying focused on the external processes allowed us to think in the mid- and long-term temporal ranges, and the conversation began to move toward the scope of the strategic plan.

We started to talk about the length of the strategic plan at one point. The conversation had come up before in meetings, and we had discussed a one to three-year plan. When the Corona Norco United Way was a pass-through funding organization, we would assess our grantees based on whether they had a three to a five-year strategic plan. Hence, it was interesting that we would be looking for a shorter time frame than holding our partner agencies. As we discussed the issue further, it became clear that the next year would be critical to our operation. The new CEO was six months into position and had already reorganized the CNUW, had secured over five hundred thousand in grants at this point and was updating the strategic plan collectively with all the staff and Board members involved. The context of what we needed to achieve in the next year gave us a better idea about the time frames. We also realized that focusing only on the next year left us open to continuity and goal-focused problems. We recognized that staying in the one-year range made the organization reactionary and unstable in the short term. Therefore, we discussed a compromise.

The internal and external processes theme would translate into business continuity and fiscal sustainability areas of focus. Brand and community would live more in the two to the three-year range, with Mission and Vision being in the three-year time frame. The board focused on three to five years for a couple of reasons. Namely, we tended to be ‘future-focused and were less involved with what was happening day-to-day’, and our standards for agencies we funded were that they have a three to five-year plan. The staff were put in a threat state by thinking in such long-time frames. They could not see any planning past a one-year time frame and felt that speaking in three- to five-year time frames showed a disconnect between the board and the daily operations. The CEO

stepped in again to navigate the distance between the board and the staff. The CEO indicated they were ‘also concerned with a mid-range strategy in the two and three-year range but focused on daily activities.’ The compromise was the one to a three-year range of the strategic plan and represented a collective leadership effort on all levels. Having defined time frames for the plan, we moved on to the Mission.

Aligning on the United Way Worldwide mission was an overriding theme for the call. We wanted the strategic plan to reflect the United Way Worldwide mission of addressing critical needs in the community through Income, Education, and Health. Nonverbal cues emerged, such as looks of confusion, furrowed brows, indicating that the board members were not clear on our current methods. Verbally they expressed a desire to ‘staff and CEO to have a session with the Board President and then return to the board with what we had created during that session.’ They cited that the ‘board is in a different place and has different perspectives than the staff’ and the ‘CEO and board president seemed to have a pulse for the two groups, and fewer voices would make the process easier.’ I commented that ‘we would still need to have voices from their individual activities, so all voices were included.’ The conversation represented a critical turning point as the participants started to feel awkward, trying to bridge the gap between the staff and the board of directors (Tenkasi and Hay, 2004). We spent the remainder of the time addressing this feeling and talking about how ‘this process was new to most of us’. We agreed that I would meet with the CEO and staff to work on their input since the virtual space was not conducive to the different levels of understanding and interaction and come back to the board with the CEO on what we had produced.

I believe this conversation stayed true to the process for a couple of reasons. We had all committed to the process and the direction of breaking out into two different sessions. Two, we believed that the breakout sessions would allow us to hear potentially muted voices, silenced by the virtual format with such a wide range of education, experience, and positional authority. It is critical to acknowledge that, while those involved followed the interaction's ground rules, the practical application still created discomfort in all the participants. Third, we had agreed to breakout after aligning on tools and content we would use to proceed to the next session. Finally, we set a date for the next sessions

to review the content and continue the work. At the end of the session, the contracting we gave all involved a sense of collective decision-making that let us move on to the next phase.

6.5.1 CEO and Staff Post Action Reflection

One of the advantages of a project like this is that emergent actions can cause a big leap forward in progress. These emergent events speak to the constructionist nature of our Appreciative Inquiry (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012; Coghlan, 2019; Stacey, 2011). After our call, the CEO immediately gathered the staff to draft a strategic plan update (see Appendix O) using our identified goals and focus areas. Like the initial recap, the CEO provided the first strategic planning session before meeting with all participants (see Appendix L). This version combined the ideas from Figure 34 and produced a more coherent draft of the strategic plan (see Appendix O). I sent this document to the board of directors in preparation for our strategic session breakout as the CEO and staff's contribution to the next step in the Destiny phase. In the following sections, I discuss the focus areas, goals, and objectives of the strategic plan draft as delivered to the board of directors for our final meeting.

The first area of focus that the CEO and staff put as an area of focus was Organizational Continuity (OC) (Figure 35). Within OC, there were three goals of business development, emergency planning, and staff development. All three of these goals fit into themes of internal processes that emerged in the raw data associated with the phases and thematic coding (Appendix Q). The second-order aggregate dimensions for this section were *Internal and External Processes* and the second-order theme *assets*. The first-order codes were related to existing assets and internal strengths for both leadership and staff. Therefore, it made sense that each of these goals' objectives was focused primarily on updating current procedures and plans. The overall feel of this first area of focus was one of stabilizing current day to day operations. Since the staff's main task was operational, it made sense that they would be most concerned with things that impacted them directly.

Corona Norco United Way Strategic Plan
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Corona-Norco United Way

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTINUITY

Goal 1: Business Development				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	**Update policies and procedure** a. (identify policy or procedure) b. (identify policy or procedure) c. (identify policy or procedure)			
Objective 2:	**Develop new/missing policies and procedures (new guidelines, diversity, inclusivity, etc.)** a. (identify policy or procedure) b. (identify policy or procedure) c. (identify policy or procedure)			
Objective 3:	**Develop an emergency plan (pandemic, earthquake, etc.)** a. (identify emergency and plan--pandemic) b. (identify emergency and plan—EQ) c. (identify emergency and plan—IT failure)			

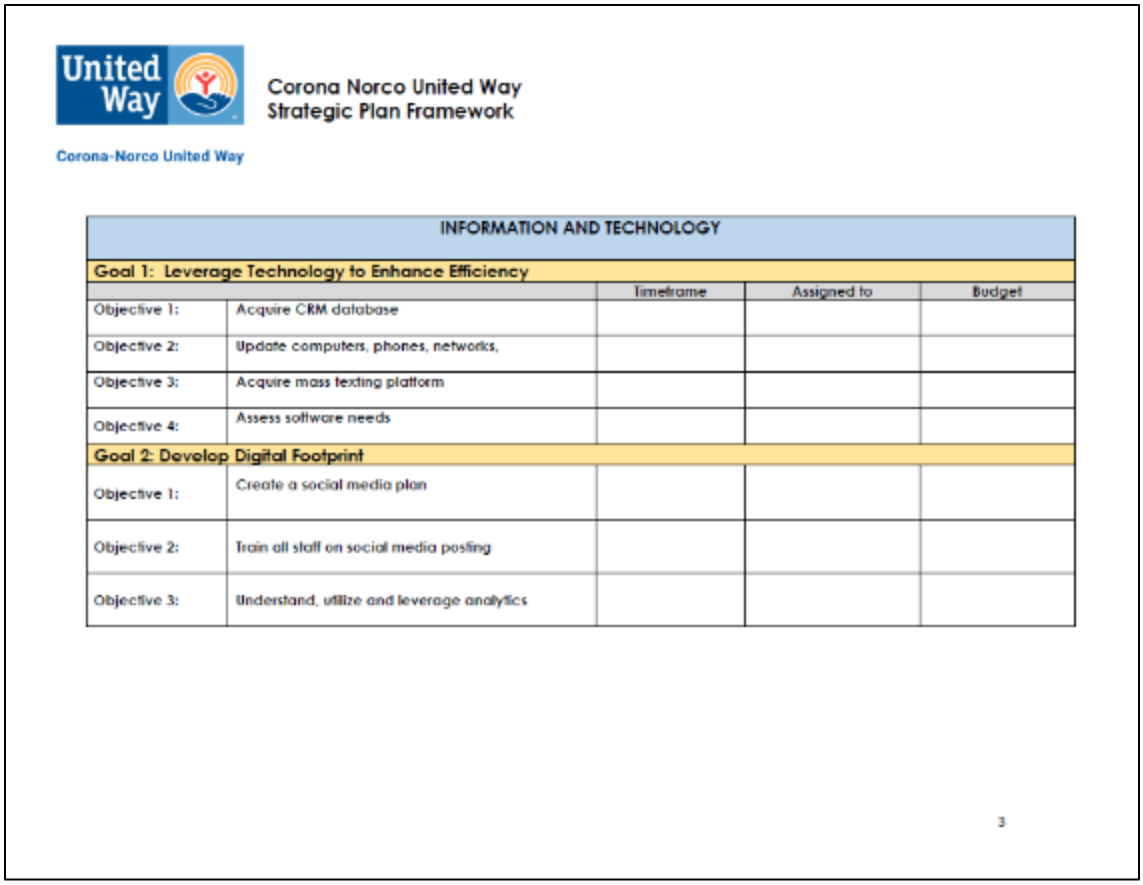
Goal 2: Emergency Planning				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	CPR Training for staff			
Objective 2:	Develop an evacuation plan and drill			
Objective 3:	Active shooter training			
Objective 4:	Situational awareness training (DV perpetrators, personal safety)			
Objective 5:	Emergency preparedness supply cache			

Goal 3: Staff Development				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Cross training (DV intake, finances, CYSP, etc.)			
Objective 2:	**Training and certifications** a. (identify training or certification) b. (identify training or certification) c. (identify training or certification)			
Objective 3:	Mentorship Program			
Objective 4:	Employee retreat			
Objective 5:	Employee health program (mental, emotional, etc.)			

Figure 35 - Strategic plan Framework: Organizational Continuity

The Board members in the last session had started to express some awkwardness with the staff's perspective. They cited ‘differing perspectives and roles’ and felt that times spent in a group ‘created confusion’ and ‘made the work more difficult.’ The two groups had operated on different levels so long that closing the gap between them was viewed as a project that might take longer than we had. I was reluctant to split the work into the two respective groups, but I wrote in my personal journal that I ‘realized the need for compromise to move the project forward’ and ‘the need to mitigate the loss of voice by ensuring the data included was gathered collectively before the CEO and I met.’. The draft provided by the work from the CEO and staff demonstrated that tendency toward short term operational concerns on the part of the staff. The perspective was crucial in helping the board stay grounded in operations, so we were not providing focus areas and goals that were too lofty, causing the staff to feel disconnected, unappreciated, or misunderstood.

The second area of focus identified Information and Technology (IT) as a critical piece of the strategic plan (Figure 36). The goals for IT included: Leverage Technology to Enhance Efficiency and Develop Digital Footprint. The IT area of focus related to second-order aggregate dimensions of Internal and External Processes and second-order themes of *assets* from the thematic coding data (see Appendix Q). There were also some topics related to the second-order aggregate dimension brand and first-order concepts of marketing. However, we determined that the Marketing Plan and the Marketing Committee formed by the first strategic plan were part of the brand's processes. The Marketing committee set priorities for updating the website and producing Marketing materials after creating the first strategic update. However, the momentum from that strategic plan did not carry forward. We found out later due to a disconnect between our internal and external processes. Incorporating the Marketing functions into a strategic plan through building systems and infrastructure would create a more stable Brand presence and help the CNUW establish a wider community presence. The CEO was not there for any of the first strategic plan implementations, so it was a clear and present focus for the staff and a direction the CEO was interested in pursuing.



Corona Norco United Way
Strategic Plan Framework

Corona-Norco United Way

INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY				
Goal 1: Leverage Technology to Enhance Efficiency				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Acquire CRM database			
Objective 2:	Update computers, phones, networks,			
Objective 3:	Acquire mass texting platform			
Objective 4:	Assess software needs			
Goal 2: Develop Digital Footprint				
Objective 1:	Create a social media plan			
Objective 2:	Train all staff on social media posting			
Objective 3:	Understand, utilize and leverage analytics			

3

Figure 36 - Strategic plan Framework: Information and Technology

The third area of focus from the framework was a focus on Board Development (Figure 37). The three goals associated with Board Development included Board Selection, Role Clarity, and Develop Clear Expectations. The focus area and goals were related to the second-order aggregate dimension of Internal and External Processes and second-order themes related to Role Clarity. Sherlock and Nathan (2008) identified the power dynamics that a CEO might face early in their tenure and how they affect learning. The third area demonstrated the CEOs awareness of this dynamic, especially when navigating collective and centralized leadership tensions. When discussing this section, the CEO intimated that the board's unclear roles made the day-to-day operations difficult because there was no clear direction. We discussed how the board had three main functions outlined by the UWW and the CNUW. We were there to provide the vision for the CNUW and hire or fire the CEO. Implied in the latter is an oversight that can contain elements of both conformance and performance roles.

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BOARD DEVELOPMENT				
Goal 3: Develop Clear Expectations				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Donation requirement			
Objective 2:	Produce contacts and networking opportunities			
Objective 3:	Be a force multiplier			
Objective 4:	Implement accountability and identify who will be responsible			
Goal 1: Board Selection				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Identify the process of selecting board members (who, how, when, etc.)			
Objective 2:	Diversify Board members to reflect the community served			
Objective 3:	Broaden range of Board Member skillset (i.e. DV, Education, etc.)			
Goal 2: Role Clarity				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Update job description			
Objective 2:	Develop clear onboarding process			
Objective 3:	Understand what the CNUW does with a "One Day with United Way" job shadow			

Figure 37 - Strategic plan Framework: Board Development

The way we enacted that oversight was also subject to choices in the tension between collective and centralized leadership. Conformance leadership was the one that provided direction and guidance for the CEO as well as laid out the systems of measuring performance in the past. We were attempting to use collective leadership to achieve a holistic result, and it required dialogue around role clarity. Our experience was a recurring theme that required consistent messaging and frequent reinforcement to create a new default understanding of roles. We did not have a complete and relevant strategic plan; therefore, to clarify some of the operational issues we were experiencing, we needed to complete the Appreciative Inquiry process and produce a strategic update plan.

The fourth area of focus was Fiscal Sustainability, and three goals consisting of Seek and Leverage Grants, Campaign Development/Plan/Growth, Increase Fundraising

Revenue and Opportunities (Figure 38) (see Appendix O). Seeking and leveraging grants and increasing fundraising revenue and opportunities fell under fundraising first-order concepts, revenue second-order themes, and Internal and External Processes in second-order aggregate themes. Board Development is a first-order concept related to process, education, leadership second-order themes, and Internal and External Processes second-order aggregate dimensions. Campaign Development /Plan/Growth was related to marketing and fundraising first-order concepts putting the topics in brand and Revenue second-order themes in the data under Internal and External Processes second-order aggregate dimensions. As was seen in the dialogue during sessions, there is a cross-over between the second-order aggregate dimensions.

United Way
Corona-Norco United Way

Corona Norco United Way Strategic Plan
September 2020

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Goal 1: Seek and Leverage Grants				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Create database of granters			
Objective 2:	Train staff on grant research, writing and administration			

Goal 2: Campaign Development / Plan / Growth				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Increase workplace giving			
Objective 2:	Seek opportunity with businesses not yet captured			
Objective 3:	Develop campaign calendar			
Objective 4:	Train staff on campaign presentations			
Objective 5:	Create and streamline pledge forms			

Goal 3: Increase Fundraising Revenue and Opportunities				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Attend community events			
Objective 2:	Develop CNUW Fundraising event			
Objective 3:	Identify new ways to fundraise			
Objective 4:	Follow up with donors			

Figure 38 - Strategic plan Framework: Fiscal Sustainability

Fiscal sustainability catered to the CEO's strength and was where the most successful and clear changes in the CNUW occurred since the process began the year before. Grant writing and implementation was familiar territory for the CEO and were relevant at the time. However, the plan remained very operational and did not include involving the board and its resources, arguably some of the strongest assets for fundraising at the CNUW.

The final area of focus for the draft was Community Impact (CI), with the goals of Program Development, Advertising and Marketing, and Networking/Partnerships (Figure 39) (see Appendix O). The CI section represented the broadest of all the sections with a very wide range of overlapping coverage. For example, Networking/Partnership covered many Internal/External interactions that we Identified in our visual map. Program Development was a prominent topic of discussion in all three phases but especially in the Dream phase. The staff provided input on their aspirations for the future of the CNUW in what they called the 'brainstorming' session. The CEO and I spoke extensively on the sources of revenue for the CNUW in corporate campaigns based on volunteerism, program reach, garnering more credibility with donors, and the need to support and grow our feeder program in the form of the Youth board. The programs of the CNUW were the core of our value to clients and donors, so it makes sense that it was the largest portion. A critical piece that we would need to add to this discussion would be how to link the other aspects of the strategic plan to support our programs via cross-over relationships between internal and external processes.

Corona Norco United Way Strategic Plan
September 2020

Corona-Norco United Way

COMMUNITY IMPACT				
Goal 1: Program Development				
		Timeframe	**Assigned to**	**Budget**
Objective 1:	**Update FSS: Transformation & Sustainability** a. Quality vs. Quantity b. Low income housing c. Workforce Development d. Education (GED, College, etc.) e. Client Store			
Objective 2:	**Update CYSP** a. Modernize CWC b. Quality over quantity c. Equipment acquisition d. Develop tutor program e. Create field trips			
Objective 3:	**3a. Develop Volunteer Program** a. Application process b. Background checks c. Waivers (forms) d. Timesheets e. Appreciation ceremony **3b. Corporate volunteer opportunities** a. Seek Corporate philanthropist represented organization b. Develop quality/ fun/ fulfilling projects c. Volunteerism in community events **3c. Explore Staff Volunteer Opportunities in the community**			
Objective 4:	**Develop Internship Program** a. Application process b. Background checks c. Waivers (forms) d. Timesheets e. Appreciation ceremony f. Partnerships with colleges and universities			
Objective 4:	**Youth Board** a. Implement Adulting 101 b. Identify community impact projects c. Capture expenditures for budget process			

Goal 2: Advertising & Marketing				
		Timeframe	**Assigned to**	**Budget**
Objective 1:	**Update collateral (brochures, handouts, etc.)**			
Objective 2:	**Update website** a. Seek alternate website platform b. Availability in alternate languages			
Objective 3:	**Assess need for Swag (shirts, cups, pencils, stickers, etc.)**			
Objective 4:	**Digital billboards/bus stops**			
Objective 5:	**Develop a media plan** a. Create media contact list (PIO's) b. Create Press Release Template c. Train staff on PR and media d. Dissemination method			

Goal 3: Networking/Partnerships				
		Timeframe	**Assigned to**	**Budget**
Objective 1:	**Develop a list of agencies who to partnership with (national, state, local) and create contact database**			
Objective 2:	**Develop a list of businesses (Gyms, grocers, etc. – fundraising, gift cards, times, services)**			
Objective 3:	**Develop a non-profit resource guide/database**			
Objective 4:	**Speaking/interview opportunities**			
Objective 5:	**Partake in community meetings**			
Objective 6:	**Hold places on boards and committees**			

Figure 39 - Strategic plan Framework: Community Impact

6.6 Destiny Meeting part 2

After a couple of weeks and after looking at the Strategic plan Framework draft, we reconvened. We started by revisiting the staff's questions about the Appreciative Inquiry process and the Strategic plan's current state. The CEO was able to further clarify with the staff, and we confirmed that the staff was up to speed and clear on where we were in the process. The Board participants were the only participants besides the CEO for this special session and were concerned that the staff was not comfortable with where we were in the process. Finally, we were able to say the staff was comfortable with moving forward. The participants' feedback was that the framework lined up with our last call, that some of the goals and focus areas were redundant, but that the overall framework set us up to be able to work on the "what" and that would let us do more work on the "how" later.

The first section we revisited was Organizational Continuity (OC) (Figure 37, p. 153). The goals were Business Development, Emergency Planning, and Staff Development. One of the participants has a great deal of experience in this type of planning, and we spent some time discussing the difference between emergency planning and organizational continuity. We immediately saw how the Board members questioned the framework's operational or tactical focus, bringing the centralized/collective tension to the surface. The CEO quickly claimed this territory, and we collectively agreed to follow the CEO's centralized leadership of the internal processes. After clarifying the roles, we quickly agreed to classify the emergency planning goal and not overlap business development and emergency planning. The participants were also quick to voice support for the path that the CEO was following with staff.

The CEO suggested changing the focus area from Organizational Continuity to Business Development or Business Continuity. The participants liked how renaming it made the purpose for that area more focused. Sustainability came up as a participant's suggestion, and the CEO quickly differentiated between creating a daily operational roadmap for efficiency versus a plan for long-term sustainability. Again, the major alignment work turned to the time frame for what we were discussing. The CEO and staff focused on the daily operations while the Board participants were looking for something

a little more focused on the future rather than the daily ‘nuts and bolts’. What was impressive to me was how the participants stayed engaged in collectively making the decisions. Different participants tried to end this section and move on several times for the sake of time or possibly because of the awkward situation. Participants continued to weigh in on the subject, however, showing tenacity in collectively making decisions. We eventually landed on a one-year focus for the first section about forty-five minutes into the call and gave the CEO the room to establish the next step.

We moved on to the second section of Information and Technology (IT) (Figure 37, p. 153). This section included Leverage Technology's goals to Enhance Efficiency and Develop Digital Footprint. This section was much more streamlined. A participant immediately acknowledged them as complete as written. The opinion was affirmed by a couple of other participants as well. Participants suggested including an assessment of our technological state and if it was sufficient for our needs. The "Blue" and "Gold" levels representing the focus areas and goals were fine as written. However, the participants continued to dive into objectives that we determined were too detailed and not within the board's performance roles.

Next, we moved on to the Board Development section. This section included the goals of Board Selection, Role Clarity, and Develop Clear Expectations (Figure 37, p. 153). We had spent a significant amount of time working on Board Development, so the goals and focus areas were mostly aligned with the discussions we had in our Board meetings. For example, one of the participants wanted to change the wording from the ‘job’ description of the Board Members underneath Role Clarity and wanted to reinforce that Board Members are volunteers. We were collectively committed to the onboarding process. However, the first goal did not line up with what we wanted to set as a goal. The intent was to cover more than just Board Selection. The question even came up as to whether it was necessary to include policies outlined in the By-Laws on the strategic plan. The participants took the opportunity to reinforce that just because it was in the By-Laws did not mean we were taking a strategic approach to implementing them. The bridging of the theory-practice gap, between execution and outcome (Tenkasi and Hay, 2004), was

evident in this conversation as we discussed how to bring the By-Laws to life in the strategic plan.

Fiscal Sustainability was the next section we discussed with Seek and Leverage Grants, Campaign Development/Plan/Growth, and Increase Fundraising Revenue and Opportunities as goals (Figure 38, p. 154). One participant asked us to add objectives that involved the 'caring for and feeding of grantors and donees'. The language was particularly important because it went beyond paying attention to stakeholder groups to act as stewards of them. Essentially, they wanted attention to the relationships with the external stakeholders written into the strategic plan. The request for the additions evidenced a focus on intentionally formalizing relationship maintenance between internal and external processes. Another participant suggested adding more specific language within Fiscal Sustainability to guarantee transparency of finances and financial reporting. The participants brought up fiduciary responsibility to stakeholders related to this conversation. The CEO quickly clarified whether they asked for specific language around their financial responsibilities or a strategic approach to fiscal responsibility. The CEO quickly added a goal around fiscal transparency to resolve the discussion to show that the organization is committed to showing our accountability to the communities we serve. The discussion was a good example of performance choices instead of conformance choices. We looked for innovative ways to incorporate strategic fiscal responsibility and accountability rather than rely on traditional functions. The CEO deftly looked for ways to find a strategic common ground and moved us to the next session without resistance.

Community Impact was the last section we covered and included the goals of Program Development, Advertising and Marketing, and Networking/Partnerships (Figure 39, p. 156). Once again, participants started with the objectives, and the CEO quickly moved us back into the blue and gold sections to stay focused on the proper strategic level for our call. We talked about Program Growth instead of Development. The CEO was adamant about Program Development, preferring to focus on quality versus quantity. The ensuing conversation differentiated between the short-term development of the programs and the mid-and long-term growth of the programs.

The last goal underneath Community Impact was Networking/Partnerships. The participants wanted to put action on these two concepts, so we started talking about interacting externally by leveraging our internal assets. We also discussed how these relationships are two-way and require us to manage both directions from internal and external perspectives. Next, we considered whether networking was an objective or a goal. The CEO called out specifically how they saw the operational focus at this point. The focus on the operational aspect of objectives and goals was an important turning point in the participants' collective approach. Up until this point, the CEO was still straddling the operational/strategic line. At that moment, there was a clear internalization by the CEO of how operational approaches to strategy would make our plan too narrow and short term. The rest of the draft review went smoothly, and everyone approved to move forward with the final revision to approve during our regular Board Meeting on September 23rd, 2020. At the regular Board Meeting, the board approved the plan (Appendix S), completing our process.

6.7 Evolution of the Underlying Theories and Models of Board Governance

I began the project by outlining the main theories of board governance and their underpinnings in the extant literature. Agency and stewardship theories emerged as the most researched paradigms, with agency theory as the dominant paradigm and stewardship as an alternate (Dalton et al., 2007; Van Puyvelde et al., 2012). Therefore, we conducted the project through this lens. Within board governance, Cornforth (2002) and Chambers and Cornforth (2010) theorized that there are competing models and tension inherent in board governance that organizations must navigate. However, navigating those tensions is obscured by the 'black box' (Neill and Dulewicz, 2010; Rost and Osterloh, 2010) phenomenon that often accompanies research in the field. This project sought to pierce that veil using Appreciative Inquiry and a multi-theoretical approach to understanding the events. As a result, we were able to employ Appreciative Inquiry's 4D process to achieve the research objective and sub-objectives and discover three significant findings that shed light on the tensions that organizational members face in governance. The following sections will cover how we accomplished the research objectives and sub-objectives in detail and discuss the major findings. First, I discuss how my understanding of the theoretical framework evolved and the context of the findings.

6.7.1 Evolution of the Underlying Theory

The extant literature separates agency and stewardship theory into distinct schools of thought with different perspectives on the agency problem. Divergent interests are viewed as a deficit-based problem according to agency theory and complementary as strengths to leverage according to stewardship, as illustrated in Figure 40. From this visual, principals and agents are complementary and work together to ensure their diverging interests combine to advance their goals. From the agency perspective, principals and agents are kept separate, and there is a hierarchical order and a need for oversight, conformance, and a highly detailed internal structure. The key to this perspective is the 'either/or' (Caldwell, 2005) position that theorists take to understand diverging interests in agency either as beneficial or detrimental (Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Davis et al., 1997; Van Puyvelde et al., 2012).

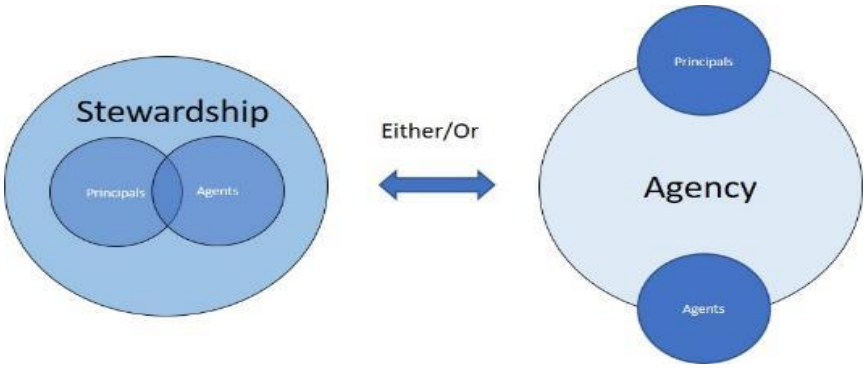

Figure 40 - Visual Representation of the Relationship Between Principals and Agents in traditional Governance Literature

6.7.2 Evolution of the Underlying Model: The Stewardship-Agency Continuum

From the literature review, I built a thematic model which connects the tensions introduced by Cornforth (2002) and developed further by Chambers and Cornforth (2010) to agency and stewardship theories (Coule, 2015). The major difference between the traditional view of diverging interests and this new model was the introduction of tensions as continuums that the board of directors must navigate (Coule, 2015; Van Puyvelde et al., 2012), as seen in Stewardship-Agency Continuum (SAC) (Figure 41). The SAC

demonstrates how stewardship and agency theories originate from opposing views of how divergent interests between the principal and agent relate to specific roles, leadership, and process focus. The leaders, staff, and directors (dark blue spheres) make decisions along this continuum (dark blue arrow) that blend stewardship and agency behaviours to differing degrees (grey spheres). The arrows at the top and bottom of the model call out forces that may push or pull the agents towards one end of the continuum or the other. The 'both/and' rather than 'either/or' label (Caldwell, 2005) in the middle of the diagram refers to the perspective that the two theories are complementary rather than mutually exclusive (Van Puyvelde et al., 2012; Dalton et al., 2007).

I initially thought of each tension on its continuum; however, participants navigated multiple behaviours simultaneously, indicating they were not mutually exclusive. Additionally, sometimes stewardship behaviours were combined with agency behaviours, such as when the CEO decided to make unilateral changes to the reorganization of the CNUW while still including the board of directors in the communication and strategy. The participants represented along the continuum refers to another discovery during the project: all participants were navigating these same tensions. While the Appreciative Inquiry mode I chose did include a whole system approach to maximize collaboration and full participation by all members, it had not occurred to me that they would also be navigating the tensions. What emerged through the project was a picture of all participants making an unintentional decision about how they would navigate the tensions. For instance, during the Discovery phase meeting, the staff discussed how they ‘made daily operation decisions without an overall plan’ even though there was an interim executive director (IED). Instead, they demonstrated centralized leadership and an internal process focus that did not consider the ripple effects for the organization or external stakeholders.

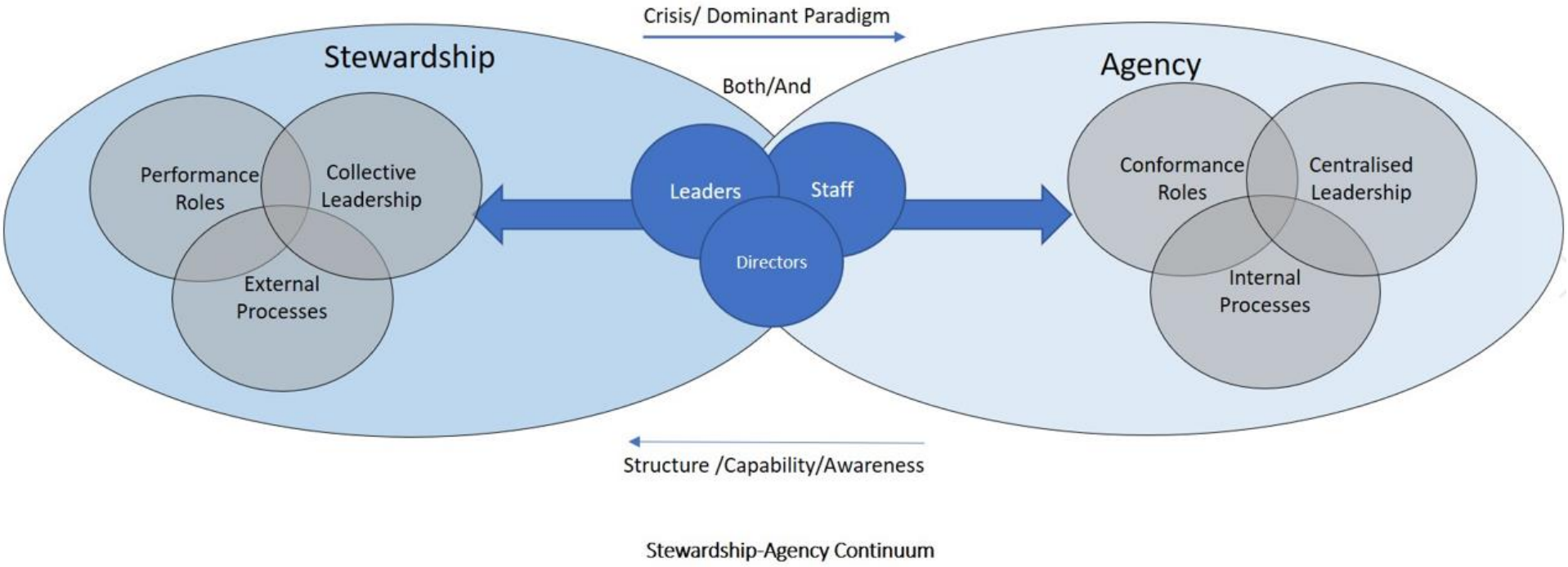

Figure 41 - Stewardship-Agency Continuum (SAC)

Another example is how when the board members faced a new crisis reveal such as a lack of funding or potential fraud, they would fall back to default leadership positions from their prior experiences as managers or leaders in their personal lives. Members used comments such as ‘well what I used to do’ or ‘what we do at my work’ to highlight their credibility in unilaterally dealing with situations of this nature and advocating for a particular course of action. The competing courses of action amounted to negotiating which guidelines to conform with and the degree to which internal processes needed to be changed or enforced. More and more of these occurrences came to light as we explored the different phases, creating a new picture of how participants interacted in governing the organization. This new model (Figure 41) illustrates not only the tensions as on a continuum but also agency and stewardship theories as well (Van Puyvelde et al., 2012).

6.7.3 Engaging in Agency-Based Behaviours in Crisis

The model outlines how agency as a dominant paradigm becomes the default or 'muscle-memory’ that participants would engage in when the structure was lacking or crisis was imminent. In the diagram, the model represents this force as an arrow where the tension created by the agency default position pulls the participants towards agency-based behaviours of conformance, centralized leadership, and internal processes. Consistent with Van Puyvelde et al. (2012), the more internally focused the leader is, the more their role is short-term and agency-based. Therefore, it makes sense that when the crisis is imminent or urgently present, the participants engage in agency-based behaviours such as centralized leadership style, conformance roles, and internal processes. However, there are two ends on any continuum, and stewardship represents the other end of this spectrum.

6.7.4 Engaging in Stewardship Related Behaviours Intentionally through Structure

As seen in Figure 42, an arrow depicts forces pulling the participants towards stewardship behaviours such as performance roles, collective leadership, and an external process focus on the bottom of the diagram. The forces exist because of the dominant agency paradigm where the related behaviours are part of the muscle memory of governance. There were many instances where employing past behaviours would have

devolved the conversation into circular debates preventing action. An example of this was how the board members navigated the decision to hire a CEO instead of merging with the other United Way. While we decided to continue to salvage the operation as an independent branch, members would vacillate on the decision in subsequent formal and informal meetings. The remaining members would collectively remind everyone why we had decided and why it continues to be the right choice.

However, the new stewardship capacity built through Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider, 1987; Cooperrider et al., 2008) helped the members be aware of the signs of circular debate caused by centralized leadership or conformance roles and collectively lead the group through maintaining the course. The intentional choice to act collectively was possible because of our awareness of the tensions we faced. These instances occurred regularly throughout the Design and Destiny phases and became easier to navigate as time went on. The temporal component is consistent with Van Puyvelde et al. (2012) connection between short-term agency-based behaviours and longer-term stewardship behaviours. Therefore, it makes sense that when interactions are intentional and structured, members engaged in stewardship theory-based behaviours were related to collective leadership, performance roles, and a focus on external processes. Therefore, it makes sense that intentionally engaging in structured, collective phases of a strengths-based approach could balance the tensions inherent in board governance. By building capability and awareness of when and how to engage in stewardship-based behaviours such as performance roles, collective leadership, and eternally balanced processes, leaders are given a choice in their behaviours.

The evolution of the Stewardship-Agency Continuum model (see Appendix R) illustrates how Appreciative Inquiry can facilitate building capability in and awareness of stewardship-based behaviours. I have established that capability and awareness of the tensions may create a pull in that direction. Without awareness, there is no choice because of the default agency-based behavioural programming that results from the dominant paradigm creating tension towards agency-based behaviours. Therefore, it makes sense that the capability and awareness can be employed to intentionally navigate tensions inherent in board governance through collective leadership, performance roles,

and processes that balance external and internal factors. In the next section, I outline how we completed the research objectives and sub-objectives of the project using our newfound capability and awareness.

6.8 Research Objectives and Sub-Objectives

6.8.1 Establishing a Path

The primary objective of the project was to establish a path to navigate leadership roles, performance, and processes in a changing landscape. The intention was to provide a clear way forward for the organization. Throughout the project, it became clear that the solution was less about establishing a path and more about building the capability of the participants to intentionally navigate the tensions inherent to board governance. The desire to establish a path was related to a linear view of the CNUW, and the issues we faced echoed in traditional governance research (Suchman, 2002; Stacey, 2011). However, the organization's picture changed by framing the problem using the thematic model I created (Figure 5, p. 52). We ultimately established the path to employ Appreciative Inquiry to understand better the roles, performance, and processes of the CNUW. The outcome was to build our capability and awareness of the tensions we face in governing the CNUW. Having established a path, we moved on to achieve our three sub-objectives.

6.8.2 Clearly define and map the current state of the CNUW

The shared understanding of the organization was quite elusive throughout the process. It became clear as I continued to talk to the participants that there were as many views of the organization as participants. Having disparate understandings of the organization created a great deal of extra crosstalk and disorganization as participants argued over how they perceived our internal and external processes. Therefore, we needed alignment to break the impasse and move on with other discussions. This required clearly defining those processes.

Clearly defining the organization's inner workings was accomplished by leveraging the model that Waterman et al. (1980) constructed and the more refined 8S model that Higgins (2005) proposed. Combined with visual mapping (Langley, 1999), we constructed the visual map that was the outcome of the Discovery phase. The creation of the visual

map was significant because it represented a shared understanding of the organization. The result was a shared understanding of the organization that freed up mindshare and discussion time, based on assumed characteristics of the organization, envisioning a shared future and ultimately implementing it.

Originally I drew upon the Rich Picture format (Monk and Howard, 1998) to understand what we were after. During the mapping process, however, input from the participants made clear that the processes were constantly changing. The perspective of a static organization that was mapped and understood was not sufficient to capture the two-way processes and relationships that made up the organization. Therefore I used visual mapping (Saldana, 2009; Langley, 1999) to account for temporal and dynamic factors. The change represented a shift in thinking from a static organization to a dynamic process-driven operation. By viewing the organization as processual and dynamic, the participants can prepare to adapt to the changes they encounter.

6.8.3 Identify leadership roles, processes, and performance strategies

Throughout the initial stages, the context was one of crisis and survival. A clear existential threat to the CNUW existed, brought about by an Executive director who had not met their leadership and fiduciary responsibilities and a disconnected Board of directors. I established that agency theory focuses on conformance, centralized leadership, and internal processes (Cornforth, 2002; Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Coule, 2015) and has traditionally been the dominant approach to governance in for-profits and non-profits (Davis et al., 1997; Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Dalton et al., 2007). This was also the case at the CNUW. Since agency-based behaviours were dominant at the CNUW when there was a lack of competent leadership and oversight, the result was a crisis.

Non-profit board governance, while similar in many ways to for-profit board governance, requires navigating unique tensions in addition to those affecting both. Members are constantly making choices on tension continuums within themes of role identity, leadership, and processes. Cornforth (2002) and Chambers and Cornforth (2010) suggested this in their research, and Duque-Zuluaga and Schneider (2008), Phillips and Pittman (2014), and Jaskyte (2018) confirm that the tensions non-profits face will involve

the employment of human capital to create value. The contribution from this project to the discussion is the introduction of internal and external processes related to community stakeholders as clients and donors. The tensions are unique to non-profits because they are the primary concern, and profit is not a motive. While there are specific tensions to non-profit governance, we can still understand them in for-profit and non-profit contexts. We can understand these tensions as identified in theory as choices between conformance and performance roles, centralized and collective leadership, and internal and external processes (Chambers and Cornforth, 2010; Cornforth, 2002; Cornforth, 2012; Mordaunt and Cornforth, 2004; Cornforth and Edwards, 1999).

6.8.4 Create and formalize a 3–5-year strategic plan

We realized that we needed to address a strong temporal component (Caldwell, 2005). Prioritizing one group's (staff, board) objectives over another could lead to disharmony and conflict (Block, 2011; Cooperrider et al., 2008). Therefore, we needed to stage work. Otherwise, we would create time frames that did not meet realistic planning logic. The original time frames of three to five years came from our allocation process when granting funds based on applications. One of the criteria for grant qualification was that the organization had a three to five-year strategic plan. We opted for a one to three-year strategic plan revision because of our objectives and plans' operational and internally focused nature. It makes sense to have an internal focus in the short term (Van Puyvelde et al., 2012; Hernandez, 2012) based on how the organization ran before the project. Conversely, engaging in stewardship behaviours is associated with longer-term plans balanced between internal and external foci. Therefore, it makes sense to transition from shorter-term strategic plans to longer-term plans over time rather than conform to a traditional time frame at the expense of relevance.

6.9 Conclusion

Governing a non-profit organization is a complex process requiring an organization to navigate multiple tensions in leadership, role clarity, and processes. I set out on this journey to gain insight into the 'black box' (Neill and Dulewicz, 2010; Rost and Osterloh, 2010) of Board Governance in non-profit organizations. To create a path for the CNUW and other non-profits to navigate the tensions inherent in that governance. I set sub-

objectives, including clearly defining and mapping the current state of the CNUW, identifying leadership roles, processes, and performance strategies, and creating and formalizing a three to five-year strategic plan. The framework I created regarding the tensions and processes and the visual map with temporal bracketing may serve as simple visual representations of those tensions. The strategic plan we created ended up being a one to three-year plan based on the organization's current state. We agreed to build our capability over the next year and revise as the capability grows.

We used the AI process to focus on the organization's strengths and move from problem-solving to envisioning a possible future. As a result, we were able to hire the right CEO for our organization and leverage their strengths, through a detailed and intentional process, to increase cash liquidity by three hundred per cent and grant income by four hundred per cent over the year prior. Most importantly, we learned that intentionally following a strengths-based approach led us to become stewards of our organization concerned with collective leadership, performance roles, and a balanced internal and external process focus. We also learned that agency has a place in governance and can move towards achieving our goals.

Appreciative Inquiry was an effective process for navigating the tensions inherent in Board Governance of the Corona Norco United Way. We discovered the organization's strengths, dreamt of a possible future, designed it, and formalized it as our destiny to form an updated long-term strategic plan. We validated that leadership could use a strengths-based approach to create a stewardship culture and employ agency-based behaviours. We established that the environment created by Appreciative Inquiry was conducive to stewardship. Collective approaches required consistent messaging and reinforcement to change cultural defaults, and AI reinforced messaging with frequent and structured communication. Our collective approach in Discovery yielded clarity on our expectations for a new CEO. We needed a CEO that would fit our future state, not our current state. Our collective focus on performance produced a result beyond our expectations. The CEO came into position in December of 2019, and there was a four hundred per cent increase in liquidity by July of 2020. Grant funding increased by over three hundred per cent within that same time frame.

While we managed to create a one to three-year strategic plan, we must still implement the plan. However, I am optimistic that the implementation is well on its way and will be successful. Since we developed the capability to use a whole systems process using stewardship behaviours to accomplish our goals, I am confident that navigating the tensions will make change more stable and easier. We designed the strategic plan to be revisited and adapted quarterly during the regular board meetings. The work will be led by the CEO and implemented by the staff. Because the strategic plan involved all of them in the Appreciative Inquiry process, we are confident the process will continue to be collective.

6.9.1 Limitations

Limitations of this research include that it was with only one organization. While these results are rigorous and relevant to the theories presented and this organization's situation, they may or may not apply to a more generalized field of non-profit organizations because of the limited sample size. Another potential limitation of my research was method was that the constructionist nature of my research potentially biased the interpretation, especially because I was the President of the Board and had a significant power disparity with other participants. I mitigated this disparity through open dialogue, transparency, and a Whole Systems Approach (Grieten et al., 2018; Cooperrider et al., 2008). Lastly, I did not include external stakeholders in the research, so the perspective of the Corona Norco United Way comes from internal participants with their perspective on external factors.

A sub-goal was to ground the research in the extant literature, theories, and relevant problems of non-profits in the social services industry to potentially generate generalizable results. I recommend that future research related to this field include a closer look at the tensions across multiple organizations. I also recommend a longitudinal study to examine how navigating these tensions can affect an organization's culture and the leaders' development. Finally, I recommend exploring profit definitions and how the tensions affect how organizations define success concerning profit.

6.9.2 Future Applications

Future applications for this work include understanding board governance in for-profit and non-profit organizations. Boards of directors can use this model to understand leadership transitions better, board transformation, turning financial crisis around, creating a stewardship culture, and applying a strengths-based process like AI to their organization. Extant literature revealed case studies where events were recorded and analysed. However, this project represents the only research within my knowledge to propose a systematic approach to unlocking the ‘black box’ through Appreciative inquiry and application of the dominant theories to the tension inherent in board governance. Therefore, the main contribution to the field of board governance from this project is a structured system for unlocking the inner workings and tensions in the ‘black box’ of board governance and has the potential to be applied to other organizations.

The United Way Worldwide has encouraged all branches to transition as we did during this project. I hope that other branches will find this information useful and benefit the communities they serve. My growth as a scholar-practitioner has been exponential. I moved from thinking I knew the answers to a static problem to understanding a process for governing in a dynamic, live, and moving organization full of engaged and capable individuals. In the final chapter, I elaborate on my development and insight into Action Research as a scholar-practitioner.

7 Personal Reflection on the Journey

7.1 Introduction

The final chapter focuses on my journey as a scholar-practitioner and how I developed through the project. The project began with a transition from an obsolete organizational model to a program-based operation seeking alternative revenue streams in a changing landscape. When the Executive director and the board of directors' interests diverged, we began a journey of understanding how that problem manifested in our organization. The journey provided many insights for me as a scholar-practitioner, President of the Board, researcher, and businessman. In the following sections, I discuss insights on my journey as a scholar-practitioner and how my ontological and epistemological perspectives evolved. I also discuss what I learned about the CEO-Chair relationship and how boards react to leadership transitions through the lenses of researcher and president of the board.

7.2 Journey as a Scholar-Practitioner

7.2.1 Epistemological Evolution

Identifying my ontological and epistemological position has been a struggle since I first encountered the topics. It seems that such a fixed position in topics that determine the filters from which we view the world is limiting and will tend to average a pattern of thinking rather than explain how a person thinks. Easterby-Smith et al. (2012, p.34) outline an activity for determining an individual's ontological and epistemological positions on a research subject. At first, I interpreted this exercise to identify how a person thinks based on who they are and then that perspective would be how they approached everything. I also thought that the knowledge would categorize people into schools of thinking, and that was why many researchers, even within fields, are siloed and experience barriers to communication and sharing research.

My understanding of how people come by their ontological and epistemological perspectives has changed throughout the project. I now understand that ontology and epistemology are choices that we make once educated about what they are and how they relate to us. However, there are no other options before being educated, and therefore,

there is no choice. Furthermore, they are not mutually exclusive. For example, it may make sense to see positivism and social constructionism as opposites (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). However, many philosophical perspectives combine them and even use multiple perspectives within the same project (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

The tensions were very similar within the project in how they initially appeared separate or mutually exclusive, even dichotomous. A significant lesson in my development as a scholar-practitioner is realizing that a researcher's ontological and epistemological positions change over time and requires constant revision. Then it is possible to understand the context for the research. Understanding that my position was relativistic and constructionist assisted me in facilitating the workplace problem and then selecting modes that worked to achieve our objectives.

A critical component for me, however, was realizing that my view on academic research was positivist. This required me to reconcile my view of research with my approach to the research project. Two developments facilitated this. First, as I mentioned earlier, that my philosophical perspective is a choice, and second that my philosophical perspective can be situational. Operating in a default mode where the context and perspective where I have not examined my perspective or the context creates a bias to the research that needs to be understood for proper analysis. I believe my positivist perspective originated from my education prior to the DBA and is a natural result of a positivist paradigm in the curriculum and became a default through a lack of knowledge on how I was approaching the work. By developing as a scholar-practitioner, I was able to examine my philosophical perspective, weigh the alternatives, and choose the perspective that most closely aligned with my thinking and belief system. As a result, I am communicating my research in a common language that facilitates understanding and application.

Understanding my relativistic and constructionist perspectives helped me understand the choices I was making and how they shaped the data. In many ways, I was constructing the project and working with real perspectives and situations, whether the project happened or not. I also believe that I could have used critical realism or pragmatism to

guide the research. I considered these, especially considering the applied nature of action research and my project. However, I felt as if these perspectives would not capture the constructed nature of the CNUW and the reality we shaped as we governed. I wanted to capture the subtle nuances of that construction to unlock the ‘black box’ that obscures participants' choices. I realize, upon reflection, that I was working to understand myself as a scholar and a practitioner during the project. The outcome would be to understand better the context of the project and its participants. I understood that my ontological and epistemological perspectives assisted in navigating the role duality of being the President of the Board and the researcher at the same time.

7.2.2 Role Duality

Acting as an insider has provided many insights, though two specific insights stand out for me: responsibility for the project versus the organization, the role of the president versus researcher, and the CEO-president relationship. Though I had read literature on role duality, I was still quite unaware of how difficult navigating the role of president and researcher at the same time would be. The role of a researcher is traditionally positivist (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007). It turns out that I had a very positivist perspective on the researcher and a much more social constructionist view as a leader within the organization. I had read that Brannick and Coghlan (2007) counter the idea that researchers must be objective. Additionally, insider action research provides insight that may not be possible from an outside objective role (Coghlan, 2019).

7.2.2.1 Responsibility for the Project Versus the Organization

When I began my work at the CNUW in 2012, the Executive director brought me in specifically to help transition the organization from funds allocation to program-based operations. I sought out the United Way in Corona because I volunteered for the last seven years connected with my former job. Beginning in a new area with a new company, I wanted to continue the work and potentially connect the CNUW with Starbucks. Over the next three years, I built my knowledge of the CNUW and non-profits and developed as a consultant in my role at work.

Over time concepts, such as action research and the action research cycle (Coghlan, 2019), I encountered in the DBA programme coincided with the reading I was doing at work on consultation (Block, 2011). Combined with the transition to a program-based operation and my appointment as the committee chair, and my eventual election as the President of the Board, my work, volunteerism, and educational development was the perfect fit for the thesis.

Leading up to and throughout the project's initial stages, I spent much time preparing the participants for the work. When I first introduced the thesis concept and how it would assist the work at CNUW to transition the organization, I first experienced the pull of role duality. I recorded in my journal how ‘conflicted I felt’ navigating the multiple roles I would be navigating. I had no idea that I would be taking on three separate roles at the outset. I was just focused on the scholar-practitioner piece. Additionally, I did not know how to prioritize when conflict arose. Practitioner came to include the multiple roles I serve in a personal, business, leader, and volunteer context. I believe this is one of the confounding factors for many non-profit leaders as they seek to understand their leadership in non-profit organizations. Volunteering is an intensely personal experience and touches on beliefs and perspectives that normally do not come into the business or leadership contexts. Personal experiences guide how an individual feels when encountering subjects such as homelessness or domestic violence. A lack of reflection on these different roles, beliefs, and perspectives can cause conflict in handling situations and their perspectives to decision-making (Kakabadse, A., Kakabadse, N., Moore, P., Morais, F., Goyal, R., 2017; Thomas, 1977; Phillips and Pittman, 2014; Badaracco, 1998; Sundaramurthy and Lewis, 2003). My research's major and unique contribution to the field is providing a system for reflection and navigating the tensions that those roles can create (Solomon and Huse, 2019; Stohl and Cheney, 2001; Cornforth, 2002; Lüscher and Lewis, 2008; Kakabadse et al., 2017).

The pull manifested primarily because of my role as an external private businessman representing a major multi-national corporation, my role as the president, and as a researcher seeking my doctorate. On the one hand, I was responsible for guiding the organization through a transition. On the other hand, I was personally accountable for my

educational, volunteer, and employment goals. Tying the CNUW transition to my success in the DBA was daunting and made the project very high stakes indeed. The workload was triple as I had to take time to volunteer, research, and still accomplish my full-time job simultaneously. Recording personal journal entries throughout was sometimes the only way I could keep straight how I was feeling and reacting to roles. They were invaluable in helping me understand my perspectives and choices. The reward was all access to the organization, the ability to pierce the 'black box' (Neill and Dulewicz, 2010; Rost and Osterloh, 2010) and use the learning resources of the DBA. The opportunity to gain access and insight and advance the field was too much to pass up.

The board members brought up the conflict that arose when faced with the prospects of choosing between the roles as we discussed conducting our organizational transition in concert with my thesis. I reassured the members that should a conflict arise, my commitment was to the CNUW and should I need to choose, I could change the subject of my thesis. I recorded in my journals that the prospect terrified me. This was exactly the situation I feared, though my commitment to the CNUW and the community members was primary. The subject came up again at the first Discovery meeting as the board members baulked at the pre-work and structure required for our formal processes. I recorded in my journal that a participant asked, ‘are we going through all of this so you can get your doctorate? Or is this the right path for our organization?’. Again, I reassured everyone that should the board decide, ‘I would change the subject of my thesis, and we could continue with our work’. I believe they wanted to hear that the direction would be the same without my educational goals. The last time the subject came up was after the new CEO came on board and questioned me in much the same manner. Again, I offered to change the subject of my thesis. The CEO was satisfied with the commitment to the process.

7.2.3 CEO-President Relationship

The relationship between the Executive director and myself as the President of the Board of directors was complicated and multi-layered. The dynamic and evolving nature of the Chair-Chief relationship is well documented and focused mainly on power struggles, communication, and crises (Shen, 2003; Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Sherlock

and Nathan, 2008; Cornforth and Macmillan, 2016). Cornforth and Macmillan (2016) call out multiple situations concerning board and CEO relationships: CEO-Dominated board, Chair-dominated board, Power-Sharing or Democratic board, Fragmented board, and a Powerless board. The first two are self-explanatory, whereas the Power-Sharing board or Democratic board tends to reject any single dominant leader. Competing factions can characterize the Fragmented board, and the Powerless Board is unclear about its roles and cannot take decisive action(Cornforth and Macmillan, 2016).

The relationship that I experienced with the CEO at the project's beginning and end provide unique insight into how CEOs enter and exit. Agency has traditionally been the dominant theory for understanding CEO-Chair relationships (Cornforth and Macmillan, 2016) and categorizes them distinctly. A difference in my experience was that boards could exist in more than one of these states within any given period. Initially, the board was CEO-dominated, with the Executive director filtering all the information and connections with outside stakeholders. As we asked questions about the organization's inner workings, the CEO became agitated and eventually resigned. We found out after the fact that many issues were affecting the performance of the CNUW. Next, we became a powerless board as we struggled with our next move and had unclear roles and understanding of where we fit in the picture. Then, through the strategic planning process and the subsequent Appreciative Inquiry process, we became a Chair-dominated board where I facilitated most of our actions as we prepared for our AI phases. I believe this was necessary to take us down the path of educating ourselves on governance. Next, we became fragmented as we started to learn and take positions on the issues we faced. Finally, we transitioned to a Power-Sharing board through the four phases, and my role became more of a facilitator. Ultimately the project ended with a CEO-dominated board again as the new CEO took over the final stages of updating the strategic plan and implementing it.

Concurrent with the existing literature, trust and communication are critical to the evolution of the CEO-Chair relationship (Shen, 2003; Donaldson and Davis, 1991; Cornforth and Macmillan, 2016). Additionally, the UWW provides information on the CEO-Chair relationship (see Appendix J). One example was the Design meeting where we

introduced the new CEO after being on a Chair-dominated board for about a year. During the Design meeting, the CEO took over the questions and answers for our breakout despite having a limited understanding of the project up to date. I decided to defer rather than engage in a power struggle. My deference slightly confused and agitated the new CEO as I asked them to lead us through the exercise. They had assumed I would take a much more central role in guiding the conversation. I realized that though I had prepared the CEO for the conversation through the informed consent and participation information sheet, they had not been present for the preliminary phases. Therefore, they were processing the events through their lens, not through the lens we had developed as an organization over the last six months. Therefore, I embraced the event as an emergent process in our meeting.

A transfer of power was inevitable, in my view. Personally, I recorded feeling emotions of ‘jealousy’ and ‘defensiveness’ as I explained and justified my actions and the board's actions. Relating the past experiences and decisions to the CEO caused me to reflect on why we did what we did and how it impacted all the stakeholders. The financial troubles, especially the accounting fraud, really shook my confidence as a leader. These things happened on my watch. I recorded feeling ‘vulnerable’ and even sometimes ‘regretful’ as I looked back at how we got where we were today. Ultimately, I felt a net positive as I looked at all the community members we helped during that time. The idea that the community is better off because of the CNUW has kept me going through many trials and tribulations. I realized in retrospect that many of the board members might feel the same.

The board had taken over much of the centralized leadership in the absence of a permanent leader. The interim executive director had not led the organization and had spent most of their time keeping the day-to-day operations functioning. Therefore, the board had become much more involved than we intended. We described this as having difficulty maintaining the right 'attitude' of hiring, directing, or firing the executive director/CEO. As a result, we could not engage in our preferred collective leadership role, tending toward centralized leadership. I saw the opportunity to right-size the leadership imbalance and seized the moment to establish the CEO as the leader. Ceding power was a simple act, but I could not help but feel a sense of loss.

The power and status of a centralized role created a mindset that is not easy to recognize until that power is absent. More than any other occurrence, this realization clarified for me the extent to which we had continued to opt for centralized leadership roles despite the collective leadership processes in which we had engaged. As a result, multiple leadership roles emerged, painting a much more complex picture of the leadership role tension than previously understood.

The participants immediately opened to talk about the visual map and the major themes they felt needed to move the organization forward. I assumed a passive role and took notes on the discussion. The themes became clear quickly. The participants wanted to see increased revenues, establish a brand in the community, grow our programs, and stabilize daily operations' internal and external processes. Without intending it, a transference of power had started to happen naturally. Almost as if the presence of the right leader filled a vacuum.

The new CEO's presence created a new dimension to accomplishing the work in the future. The CEO's integration into the organization was occurring in a slightly different way than we had anticipated. Though we had identified the values and relational paths that we wanted the CEO to create, it was much different from having them present and creating them. In hindsight, it was more of a lack of vision for how a multi-faceted leader with their own experiences and ideas would impact the organization. I admit to thinking that a CEO would fit neatly into our concept map, only to discover they had their ideas on how things should go. Consideration for how the CEO would join the process began that evening and became a central part of the strategic planning process.

Though the CEO-Chair relationship engaged much as Cornforth and Macmillan (2016) predicted, the experience I had differed because of perspective. Having bridged the time between two CEOs, I got a unique look at how the position transitions and the board of directors’ acts in the light of that transition. I gained insight that a CEO-dominated board could create more significant transitions as we negotiated power from leader to leader. The multiple phases that the board went through indicate that process is necessary for forming the board. In the light of an Appreciative Inquiry process, we examined the CEO

relationship through stewardship behaviours and created a different relationship based on collective leadership and performance roles rather than agency-based behaviours associated with centralized leadership and conformance roles. I am confident that our experiences gave us the data to understand the changes we needed to create a sustainable relationship with the new CEO.

7.3 The Project Ends

Ultimately the hire of the new CEO and completion of the strategic plan was the evidence the participants needed to prove we took the right path. As we implemented and refined the strategic plan post-project, it became clear that the project worked. In the days that followed, I facilitated collective meetings and encouraged the CEO to take a centralized leadership role as they focused more on internal processes. However, I recorded feeling the pull towards centralized leadership constantly. I realized that such a strong 'muscle memory' had developed through constantly making centralized choices that I had to carefully think through my actions in the setup of each meeting. Planning my role and contracting (Block, 2011) with participants to obtain role clarity and objectives became a routine for meetings. Through these tactics, I facilitated power transfer and the creation of new internal processes for day-to-day operations. The blending of the agency and stewardship behaviours assisted us in understanding how governance needed to change to fit the different levels of processes and leadership. The understanding I gained from the Stewardship-Agency Continuum assisted me in facilitating the implementation rather than leading it.

7.4 Contributions to the Field and Generation of Actionable Knowledge

7.4.1 Linking Tensions to Theories

I started with the theories of Ryan (2002) and Chambers and Cornforth (2010), linking the tensions and paradoxes of board governance to the changing landscape of social services and how those changes are impacting the United Way. A contribution of this research is grounding the tension within the extant literature of board governance. Chambers and Cornforth (2010; 2002) proposed tensions that speak to the forces that the participants contended with; however, they did not ground the work in theories present

in governance such as agency and stewardship. By linking these together, the tensions evolved from abstract concepts into an applicable model. Additionally, they gained the rigour of established research and theory in the field and the relevance of the workplace problem.

Another contribution understands how boards decide in and out of a crisis. By relating the tensions to agency and stewardship theories, I demonstrated how the crisis affects decision-making, and education and awareness of those tensions enable intentional navigation rather than default reactions. The connection between the theories and current organizational issues in the United Way laid a strong path for understanding how non-profit boards govern. The net effect is that I now know what to look for as a scholar-practitioner, and other organizations can apply this knowledge. The United Way Worldwide has already been interested and asked that I share the research so they may consult with local branches struggling with the transition.

7.4.2 Unlocking the Black Box of Board Governance

Throughout the literature, the presence of the ‘black box’ of board governance has loomed, obstructing insight into how boards govern (Neill and Dulewicz 2010; Rost and Osterloh 2010). Access has been the greatest obstacle to piercing the veil of the ‘black box’, and I accomplished this by leveraging my role as the President of the Board of directors to contract with the CNUW to engage in AR using the AI mode. By researching the multiple theories and frameworks concerning board governance, I was able to identify tensions (Solomon and Huse, 2019; Gergen and Gergen, 2000; Andriopoulos and Lewis, 2009; Cornforth, 2002; Ferrer et al., 2020; Sundaramurthy and Lewis, 2003; Chambers and Cornforth, 2010). I then related them to the extant theories (table 1, p.36) and created a new model which describes how those tensions exist on continuums that are navigated in a dynamic and ongoing cyclical process as governing occurs (see Appendix R). By combining the method of access, Action research, Appreciative Inquiry and utilizing the new tensions model I created, scholar-practitioners now have a road map for how a non-profit organization could be led through a leadership transition, financial hardship, and transformation to a new operational model. Specifically, within the context of the United Way, where all branches have been charged with changing to program-based models,

this research can be applied directly. Applying these methods can assist a non-profit organization with strategic planning and forming a three-to-five-year strategic plan.

7.5 Conclusion

Navigating the tensions inherent in non-profit board governance at the Corona Norco United Way has been one of the most challenging projects of my life. Throughout this process, I have questioned how we would complete the work many times. My journals are full of examples where I was uncertain about the wisdom or utility of continuing the project. I think the most surprising development of the project was how the research allowed me to see what was happening and did little to guide it. I found myself 'riding a wave' rather than 'leading a charge'. There was a moment in the research where the project went from being mine to being ours. I could not be prouder of how the group persevered and accomplished what we set out to do.

I was as inspired then as I am now at the adaptability of our communities and our organization. My personal growth as a scholar-practitioner has been exponential, growing in my understanding of my philosophical perspectives, leadership, and the dynamics of collective leadership. I examined my assumptions and patterns of behaviour as a leader with twenty-nine years in the retail environment, reconciling positivist views of research with constructionist views of leadership. I reflected on how those behaviour patterns affect my role as a participant, a businessman, a volunteer, and a researcher. We explored how to use theory and practice to navigate the challenges that our organization and communities face in a way that ensures stability and sustainability. I hope that we have created a path for other organizations. If they face similar issues, they might see a path forward to navigating board governance and forging an achievable and sustainable vision for their organization and communities.

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Appendix A – Discovery Meeting Agenda

Appreciative Inquiry – Whole System Discovery Meeting 6/06/19

Pre-work

- Pre-read: Flawless Consulting Chapter 11 excerpt - The Whole System Process pp. 180-182 (Block, 2011, p. 180–182)
- Pre-read: Flawless Consulting Chapter 11 excerpt - The Whole System Process pp. 183-186 (Block, 2011, p. 183–186)
- Pre-read: Flawless Consulting Chapter 12 Discovering Gifts, Capacities, and Possibilities pp. 190 – 199 (Block, 2011, p. 183–199)

Agenda

9 am	Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry
9:15 am	Strength/Asset-Based Approach

Ground Rules

1. There must be complete transparency
2. Management joins the proceedings as full participants
3. The groups must be a full cross-section of the whole system
4. Differences in status, power, title, and function disappear during the process
5. Everyone must be ready to speak up
6. If members choose not to participate, they surrender their right to complain or be heard
7. There is an emphasis on the future and what the group wants to create together
8. The session ends with agreements on next steps and who is going to work on them
9. Consultants give up the expert role

9:30 am	Breakout - Give form to the Vision of the CNUW • Interview each other
10:00 am	Summarize the picture - Share back and Map
10:30 am	Breakout - Construct Meaning Interview
11:00 am	Break
11:15 am	Summarize the Picture – Share back
11:35 am	Give Recommendations • CEO Attributes based on our strengths and potential
12:00 pm	Adjourn to Lunch

Appendix B – Informal email about pre-work from participant

Bernie Weis III

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2019 9:53 AM
To: Bernie Weis III
Subject: RE: Prep for Wednesday's Discovery Meeting

HI Bernie,

Are you free for coffee this week before the meeting? I'd like to discuss this with you. Not sure this is the right approach ref our upcoming meeting. Jerry

From: Bernie Weis III [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, June 9, 2019 11:14 PM
[redacted]
Cc: Bernie Weis II[redacted]
Subject: Prep for Wednesday's Discovery Meeting

Hello Everyone!

In preparation for this Wednesday's Discovery Meeting I have a little bit of prework in the form of reading, please read all 3 parts. I have also attached the agenda for the day and the interview document we will be using during our breakouts. Please look through these items carefully and be prepared to begin promptly at 9am. We will have a short break at 11am, and then lunch will be at 12pm. We will have our annual meeting after lunch from 12:30pm to 1:30pm. Looking forward to seeing you all!

Alicia, please make sure the staff also get these attachments in preparation for Wednesday as we will be meeting with everyone. If the youth board is planning on attending, please ask them to hold off at this time or they can join us at 12:30. Let me know if you have any questions!

Thank you,

Bernie

Appendix C – Discovery Meeting Breakout Interview Questions

Discovery Meeting Breakout Interview Questions 6/06/19

Breakout #1

1. What is working well?

2. What are our strengths?

3. Where have we succeeded?

4. What are your favourite parts of the CNUW?

5. What are we capable of?

6. What talents and resources do we have at hand?

7. What is your role in this related to the staff and CEO?

8. How would you prefer to lead in relation to the Staff and CEO?

9. What internal and external processes are the most critical to the United Way?

Discovery Meeting Breakout Interview Questions 6/06/19

Break Out # 2

1. What are your takeaways from the mapping exercise?

2. What does the information mean?

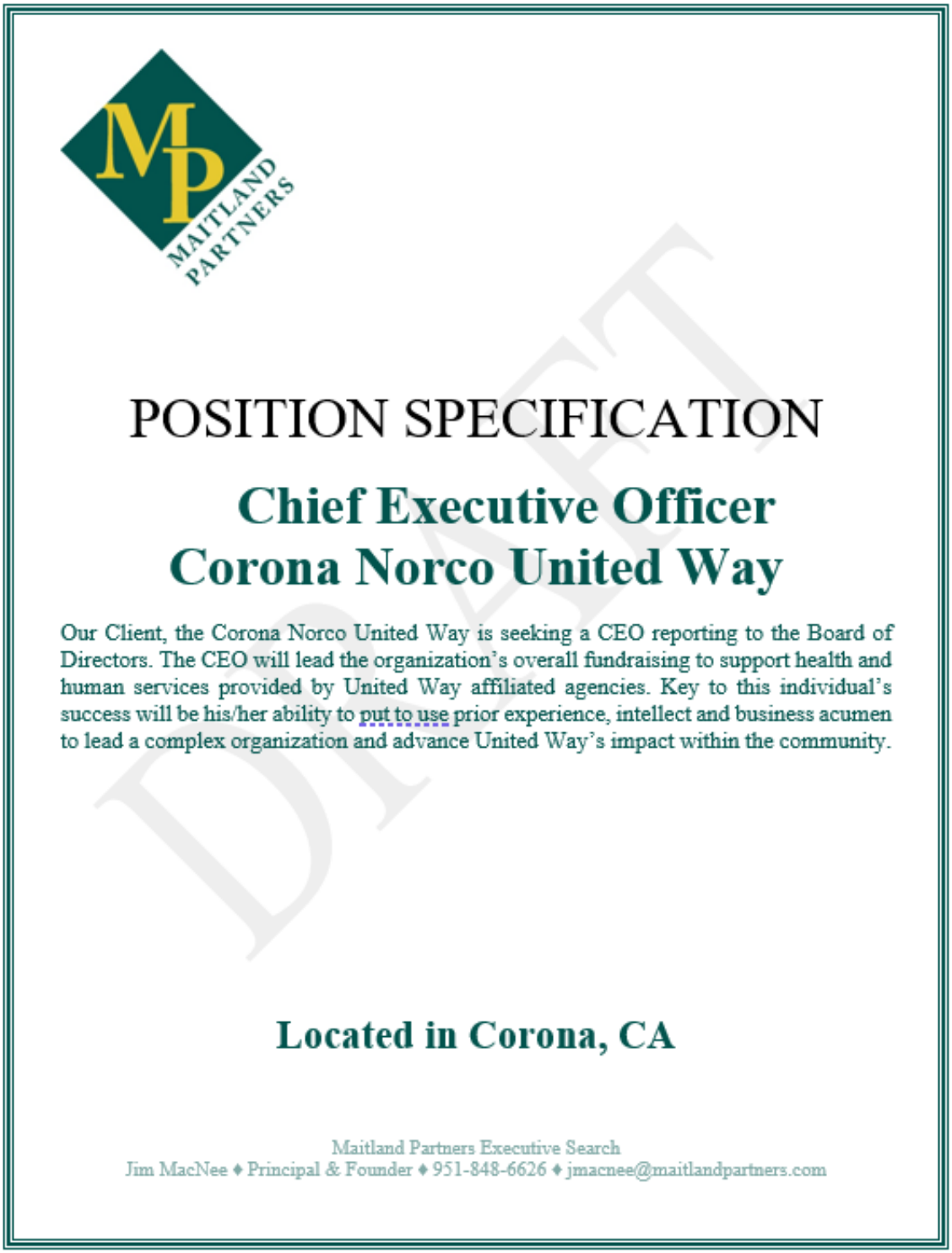
3. What is important?

4. Why?

5. What is the solution or the alternate future the discovery points to?

6. What Recommendations do you have for the job description of the new CEO?

Appendix D – CEO Position Spec Draft



Our Client:

The Corona Norco United Way (CNUW) was formed in 1958 by a group of leaders in our community that recognized the need to work in new ways to make Corona a better place. They put together an idea that became our local United Way, benefitting 10 area health and welfare agencies. They created an organization to collect the funds for local charities, to coordinate relief services, to counsel and refer clients to cooperating agencies, and to make emergency assistance grants for cases that could not be referred. That is how Corona-Norco United Way was born.

Today the Corona-Norco United Way is bringing people, organizations, and communities together around a common cause, a common vision, and a common path forward. In our communities, we're the only nonprofit building up the cornerstones of education, financial stability and health—and the only nonprofit bringing people together from all walks of life to be a part of local solutions.

The majority of the funds for these programs come from donations made by employees in the workplace through payroll deductions and from committed members of the community making leadership gifts. Grants and partnerships are a portion of United Way's revenue and will be a strategic element of the organization going forward.

MISSION STATEMENT
The Corona-Norco United Way engages the community to support and teach individuals toward educational success, and financial stability, healthful living and independence

THE OPPORTUNITY:

In partnership with the Board of Directors, the CEO is responsible for the success of the CNUW. Together, the Board and CEO assure CNUW's relevance in the community, the accomplishment of the CNUW's mission, fundraising goals and accountability.

The Board delegates responsibility for management and day-to-day operations to the CEO; they have the authority to carry out these responsibilities, in accordance with the direction and policies established by the Board. The CEO provides professional expertise to the Board and leads a high-functioning internal organization. Through the CEO, the Board seeks to increase confidence in the CNUW among donors and members of the community and maximize the value of its mission – manifested in an increase in revenue available to allocate to community needs.

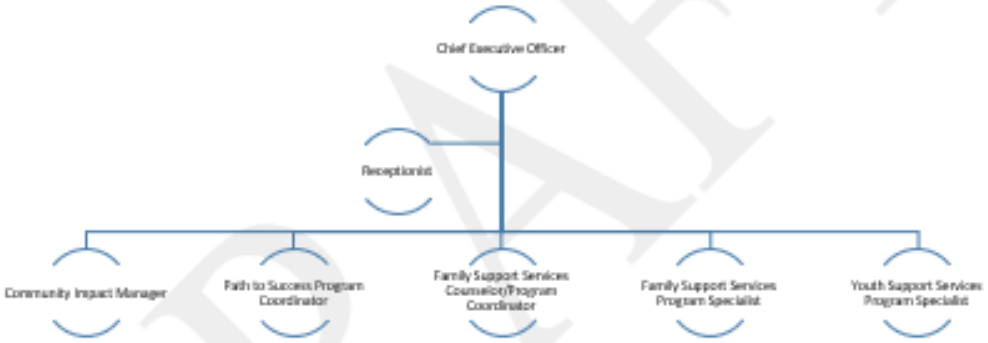
Experience as an executive in non-profit management is preferred, but an equally successful leader from a for-profit organization would be considered. The successful candidate will have solid general management and interpersonal skills including fundraising, nonprofit finance, strategic planning, marketing, leadership, and personnel management experience. They will have an understanding of governance and working with a Board of Directors.

Maitland Partners Executive Search
Jim MacNee ♦ Principal & Founder ♦ 951-848-6626 ♦ jmacnee@maitlandpartners.com

Proven experience demonstrating the ability to build and lead an organization is critical. A successful track record in raising funds, presenting and selling an organization with the intent of increasing its recognition, utilization of its services and understanding of its mission, and broadening its influence is required. Experience in business development, especially in areas of fostering personal relationships with senior business leaders and the solicitation of individual donors, foundations and corporations are essential. Familiarity with the Inland Southern California region and its industries and leaders is beneficial but not essential.

Candidates should have a demonstrated ability as an empowering, visionary leader with the talent to read internal and external pulses and the willingness to take calculated risks in forming innovative, collaborative efforts both within the CNUW and the communities served.

Additionally, they should have excellent oral and written communications skills and the ability to relate to diverse audiences and populations and a demonstrated ability to inspire and motivate staff; create a dynamic work environment, be decisive yet inclusive, and model and teach a philosophy that encourages integrity, growth, creativity, appropriate autonomy, accountability and teamwork among staff.



SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Leadership

- Practice strong organizational leadership skills with the CNUW staff to develop a high-functioning team consisting of varied skills sets, experience levels, and roles.
- Provide leadership to the Board of Directors in achieving its organizational goals through productive relationship management, the development of strategic direction, and the distribution of ethical, informative, and responsible information.
- Secure the CNUW as a leader in the philanthropic community in the region.
- Support, recruit, and develop volunteer leadership in the community to participate on the CNUW Board and committees.
- Support the Chair, Executive Committee, committee chairs and individual Board members to establish and monitor governance and organizational policies.
- Oversee and direct strategic planning and implementation by working closely and collaboratively with the Board of Directors; execute strategic plans; monitor the strategies and make recommendations for changes and updates.

Strategic Planning

- In collaboration with the Board of Directors, establish and guide ongoing process in the development of a shared strategic plan including measurable short- and long-range goals.
- Establish annual priorities based on successful implementation of the mission and strategic plan of the Board including the annual campaign, agency allocations, and community-building efforts.
- Engage staff and volunteers in planning processes and make regular progress reports to the Board. Assist in the overall assessment of the CNUW organization and its environment.

Fund Development

- Through aggressive fundraising, in concert with the Board of Directors and staff, lead fund development including annual fundraising activities, including workplace giving campaigns.
- Cultivate relationships with foundations and institutional donors and lead the pursuit of grants and contracts where appropriate. Assure strong and consistent revenue streams and build a reserve for long-term sustainability. Network actively with professional colleagues to support the advance of the CNUW mission.
- Establish financial development goals with the Board of Directors culminating in the development of an annual financial plan for the CNUW.
- Develop creative strategies and plans for achieving financial goals and assure appropriate staffing of the campaign structure.

Donor Relationship Management

- Personally initiate, build and sustain positive relationships with key stakeholders (business leaders, donors, prospects and volunteers) in workplace campaign accounts resulting in donor retention and new/increased gifts to support the CNUW.
- Strategically position the CNUW with senior leadership and decision makers throughout their organizations by initiating face-to-face meetings with executives and key influencers.
- Using a business development model, discover donors and prospect's philanthropic interests, values and priorities and engage them in the CNUW's mission and work through investment opportunities, volunteer engagement and advocacy.
- Demonstrate exemplary stewardship by providing necessary and timely feedback on investments, program information, and progress toward CNUW's goals to company representatives, donors and volunteers.

Community Investment

- Be the spokesperson and leads visibility efforts in the community. Works to achieve and maintain a positive, viable community image, assuring that the CNUW's mission is well known and that it is viewed as a valued contributor in the community.
- Serve as a confident, articulate and persuasive advocate for the CNUW to increase its visibility with private and public human service organizations and associations, advocates, lawmakers, government staff and agencies, the media, funders and key community representatives.

Staff and Operations Management

- Assure that the CNUW is staffed with diverse, fully competent professionals and delegate proper authority.
- Develop an organizational succession plan, for both employees and board members and monitor implementation. Promote continued professional development among staff and board members and demonstrate and assure cultural competency of staff.
- Ensure all staff have clear goals and objectives, regular one-on-one coaching and mentoring, and annual performance evaluations.
- Promote a positive work environment and cohesive organizational culture.
- Continually search for more affordable ways of conducting business without sacrificing quality performance.
- Oversee and accept responsibility for compliance with all applicable local, state, federal, and United Way operating and reporting requirements.
- Oversight and implementation of information technology systems to assist in activities such as fundraising, administration, and communications.

Program Management

- Promote coordinated efforts from a community-wide view; convene community stakeholders and CNUW partners. Maintain a presence and role on current community taskforces, efforts, and collaborations.
- Possess a financial acumen sufficient to assess the viability and future potential of partner agencies booth to ensure they fit the CNUW mission but also to assist in making them better organizations.
- Engage with various sectors to ensure a broad scope of public involvement in determining and prioritizing where resources will be invested.
- Serve as a community catalyst addressing the changing or emerging needs for services and align with the most appropriate delivery systems.
- Build/support effective collaborations among local organizations to meet local human service needs using the capabilities of other sectors such as service, education, faith, justice, health, business, and government.

12 MONTH MISSION CRITICAL GOALS:

- Achieve financial solvency moving forward.
- Reestablish the CNUW as the preeminent non-profit serving Corona / Norco / Eastvale communities.
- Establish a succession plan for the organization including the employees, board members and the board chairperson.
- OTHERS?

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE:

- Proven leadership and team-building skills. Ability to build consensus, rally support around common goals and motivate groups and individuals. Proven negotiation and mediation skills. Ability to overcome obstacles in order to foster cooperation and harmonious relations.
- Well-developed technical and analytical skills related to human services planning and evaluation.
- Ability to effectively work with diverse groups and populations.
- Proficient in the collection, analysis, and application of data and information.
- The ability to speak Spanish is preferred, but not required for this position.

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

The Corona Norco United Way is a professional, community-driven culture that starts every day with a positive attitude. Candidates should bring confidence backed by ability, and a competitive spirit focused on helping the organization to grow in the ways that it is able to serve the community. Personal characteristics should include:

- Possess integrity and ethics.
- Vision.
- Ability to listen well and be perceptive; understand what motivates individuals and organizations.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Value diversity and inclusion.
- Ability to work effectively with a large Board of Directors.
- Ability to deal effectively with media on sensitive issues.

EDUCATION REQUIRED:

Bachelor's degree in business, finance, accounting, public relations, communications, public administration/policy, political science or related field. A Master's degree in a relevant field is preferred.

SELECTION PROCESS:

The Corona Norco United Way is focused on finding an exceptional CEO to help lead the organization forward. They understand that in addition to the need for strong skill sets in non-profit management, finding an individual that fits the organization's culture is essential. To that end, the process developed and utilized by Maitland Partners Executive Search focuses intensely on this area.

The selection process includes the following steps:

- Candidate identification and initial screening (primarily focused on skill sets).
- Assessments (to be completed online – takes roughly 1 hour).

- Interview with a member of Maitland Partners Organizational Development Team – we utilize our knowledge and understanding of the client organization and its needs with the information developed through the assessments to gain a deeper understanding of the candidates' cultural fit.
- Face to face interview with Jim MacNee, Principal & Founder of Maitland Partners. Jim utilizes all the information gathered to gain as broad a picture of the candidate as possible. Only candidates that he feels meet the needs and requirements of the organization will be moved forward.
- Presentation of Candidate to Client – the number of Client interviews will vary based upon availability and input.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you are qualified and interested in being considered as a candidate for this great opportunity, please submit your resume to:

Kathrene Wales
Senior Executive Recruiter
Maitland Partners Executive Search
(773) 882-2682
kwales@maitlandpartners.com

Jim MacNee
Principal & Founder
Maitland Partners Executive Search
(951) 848-6626
jmacnee@maitlandpartners.com

About Maitland Partners

Maitland Partners is a retained executive search firm offering innovative, culturally based talent acquisition solutions to a broad range of industries. By combining traditional retained search principles with cutting-edge Organizational Development processes, we develop candidates that better meet our client's needs. Check us out at: http://www.maitlandpartners.com

Appendix E – Dream Activity Agenda

Corona Norco United Way

Monthly Board Meeting

8/28/19

Dream Activity

Activity	Time	Who
Introduction	5 mins	Bernie
Interviews	10 mins	Pairs
Share Back	20 mins	Spokesperson
Themes	5 mins	Bernie

Interviews

Pairs of participants get together and discuss 2 topics

- You wake up in 2024 what does the Corona Norco United Way look like?
- What was the most inspired time you felt at the Corona Norco United Way?

Share-back

In 3 minutes or less, share the story or vision that inspired you and your interview partner the most!

- You wake up in 2024 what does the Corona Norco United Way look like?

- What was the most inspired time you felt at the Corona Norco United Way?

Appendix F – CEO Interviews Agenda and Instructions

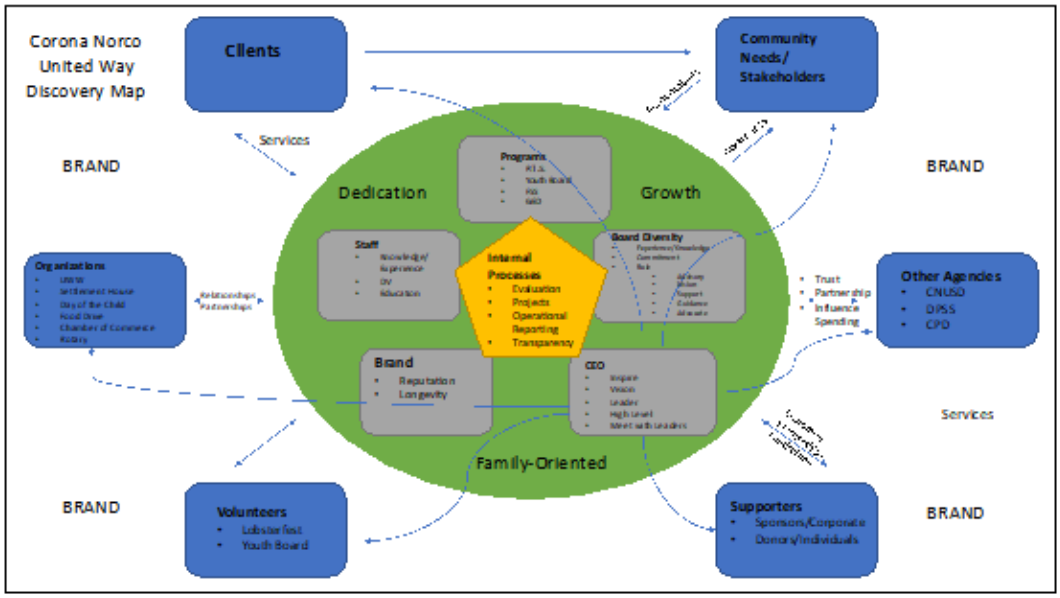
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: CORONA/NORCO UNITED WAY

The Ideal Candidate:

The Maitland Partners Executive Search has already narrowed the candidate pool to the top three most qualified applicants. You already know that each of the three are qualified and can DO the job—you are now looking for a fit for your organization. This "fit", fundamentally is determined by the Board of Directors and shaped by the elements identified in the CNUW Discovery Map.

Discovery Map:

The yellow box identifies the "how", the gray boxes, the "what", the blue boxes the "who."



Interview Question Development:

The intent is to deliver interview questions based on the collaboratively produced Discovery Map—focusing on the Internal Processes and immediate surrounding elements. The idea is to integrate these ideologies into the interview questions to identify a successful responsible, effective, and competent CEO. The desired attributes in the context of "Community" and "Professional", are:

- Authentic
- Genuine
- Leadership
- Creative
- Dedication
- Diversity
- Passionate
- Collaborator
- Visionary
- Honest
- Growth
- Family-Orientation

INSTRUCTIONS

Facilitator's Role:

This role is to guide brief introductions and quickly move into questions. You are to keep the session on track while respecting the flow of the candidate's answers. You should also help panel members move from question to question when appropriate.

Panellist Role:

Your role is to identify the candidate that would make the best fit for the Corona Norco United Way. Ask at least five of the structured questions below and as many follow-ups/probing questions as time permits.

Here is some reminder that can help the interview process flow with ease:

- ✓ Put the candidate at ease – the more relaxed they are, the more they will share
- ✓ Follow the facilitator's lead
- ✓ Probe for answers with follow up questions, they may be nervous, and the real answer may be just below the surface
- ✓ Limit crosstalk or inside comments – we are there to get as much information out of them as possible so we should limit our interactions to asking questions of the candidates
- ✓ Be present (i.e. refrain from checking your watch, phone, yawning or simply looking bored)
- ✓ Take notes so you can reference them in the debrief
- ✓ Please take advantage of the break to debrief on candidates before our final debrief where we will bring community and professional together

Additional Thoughts:

Community Panellist Name: _____

1. Why do you feel others should support our mission? How would you go about educating and engaging them?

2. What do you believe is the key to successful fundraising? Tell us a story from your experiences that represent that.

3. What do you see as the role and value of the Board in your success as a Chief Executive Officer? Can you offer us a few examples?

4. Describe your coalition-building/community outreach experience

5. Describe how you would engage our staff and senior management as well as external community stakeholders to advance our mission and vision.

6. Organizational politics is a fact. What tactics have you learned to deal with the politics in your past organization? In your community? How effective have these tactics been? Provide examples.

7. Describe a time when you had to get the support of a wide range of community stakeholders to a proposed strategy or plan.

8. How would you go about increasing our organization's brand visibility in the community?

Professional Panellist Name: _____

1. How do you reach a consensus on the right goals for the organization?

2. Describe your strategic planning process. Who is involved?
    a. How are decisions made and implemented throughout the organization?

3. It's been 6 months since we hired you—how will we know we made the right choice?

4. Can you provide a specific example that shows when you were successful in removing a barrier to achieving the organization's objectives?
    a. Of when you weren't successful?

5. Describe a situation in which you motivated your department/unit to exceed the organizational standards. What strategies did you employ?

6. Describe how you improved productivity or profitability of your organization. How did you identify and implement these improvement opportunities?

7. When delegating a project or assignment, it's important to convey trust and confidence in the person's ability to do the job. Provide an example of how you communicated your trust and confidence in a recent delegation.

Appendix G – Design Phase Summary and Instructions

Design Phase: Summary and instructions

Design: Our Objective will be to narrow in on how we would like the CNUW to operate and what we would like to focus on. We will take the Discovery Map and Dream Themes to create our Design. Please think through what you would like to see change as we approach our meeting. At the end of our meeting we will have the design for the CNUW going forward.

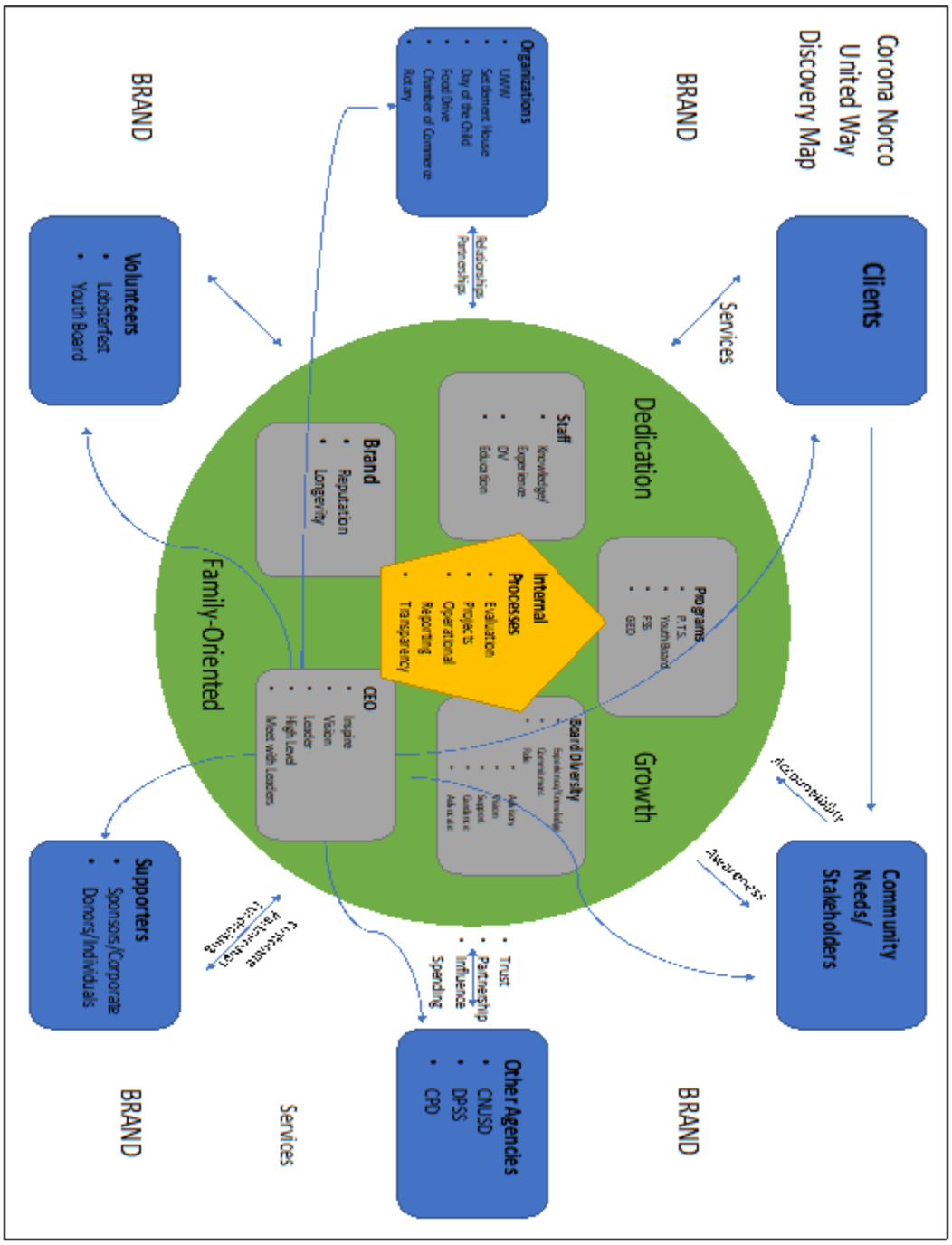
Discovery Map: The yellow box identifies the "how", the gray boxes, the "what", the blue boxes the "who." (See next page)

Themes from Discovery

- Authentic
- Genuine
- Leadership
- Creative
- Dedication
- Diversity
- Passionate
- Collaborator
- Visionary
- Honest
- Growth
- Family-Orientation

Themes from Dream

- More Revenue
- More Space
- Own space for each program
- Enhanced Budget
- Enhanced Services
- Be better known in the community
- 7 FSS staff
- Hotline
- Safehouse
- Benefits
- Back to School Backpacks
- Summer Camp
- FSS Videos/Testimonials
- GED graduate results


Corona Norco United Way Discovery Map
Clients
Services
BRAND
Organizations
UWW
Settlement House
Day of the Child
Food Drive
Chamber of Commerce
Rotary
Relationship Partnership
Volunteers
Lobsterfest
Youth Board
Dedication
Staff
Knowledge/ Experience
DV Education
Brand
Reputation
Longevity
Internal Processes
Evaluation
Projects
Operational Reporting
Transparency
Programs
P.T.S.
Youth Board
FSS
GED
Board Diversity
Family-Oriented
CEO
Inspire
Vision
Leader
High Level
Meet with Leaders
Growth
Accountability
Awareness
Community Needs/ Stakeholders
Supporters
Sponsors/Corporate
Donors/Individuals
Trust
Partnership
Influence
Spending
Other Agencies
CNUSD
DPSS
CPD
BRAND
Services
BRAND

Appendix H – CEO performance Management System - UWW

Section I. Overview: CEO Performance Management System

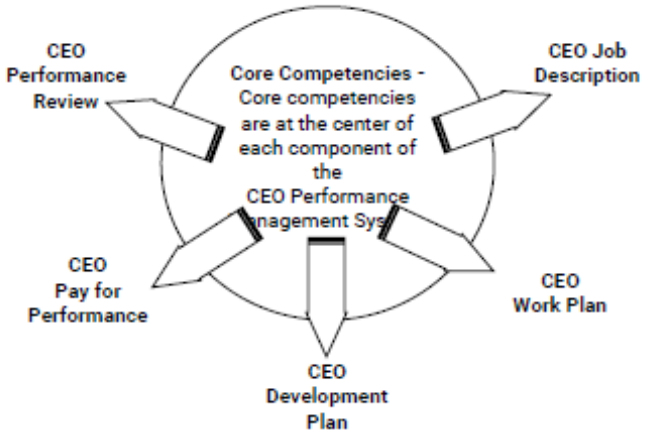
Obtaining the desired results from an organization doesn't just happen. It requires an ongoing conscious effort by all involved, and especially by the organization's leadership. The CEO Performance Management System is designed to help the Board and CEO develop, agree on, and evaluate goals, and performance standards. While there are many ways to structure a performance management system, all must be effective at steps: communicating expectations, measuring progress, and providing feedback. The following system provides such a framework.

Inside this CEO Performance Management System are elements that can support your CEO in moving your organization forward by supporting his/her performance. The key elements of the CEO Performance Management System are:

- CEO Job Description
- CEO Work Plan and Process
- CEO Development Plan and Process
- CEO Pay for Performance
- CEO Performance Review
- CEO Core Competencies

What follows is a CEO Performance Management System with elements broken out for you to consider as you move forward with developing your performance system. All the ideas, processes, and forms are for you to reference and use in establishing a performance management system that meets the needs your United Way organization.

CEO PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



Appendix I – UWW Talent Competencies

UNITED WAY TALENT MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES

Competencies for working toward a world of economic and social opportunity for all

Chief Executive Officer Competency Model

The Chief Executive Officer competencies are critical to reinforcing United Way's position as a force that is bringing the community together to focus on complex problems for the greatest possible impact and results. Competencies inform the essential abilities (knowledge, skills, and behaviors) that United Way executives must have to perform their jobs successfully. United Way should use competency models to recruit, develop, assess performance and retain the highest quality talent.

The United Way Chief Executive Officer Competency Model has total of 10 competencies – 5 specific to a role of a Chief Executive Officer and 5 defined as "core" that are fundamental to our mission and a "must have" for all United Way professionals regardless of role and function. Each competency set provides a definition for the competency, and a set of attributes and behaviors that describe the specific qualities that are expected of an individual in the CEO role to perform at the highest level.

CEO Specific

- **Visionary:** The CEO is the Chief Mission Officer, has a clear vision for the organization, confronts the complex realities of the environment and simultaneously maintains faith in a better future, providing purpose, direction, and motivation.
- **Organizational Leadership:** The CEO demonstrates strategic leadership balanced with authenticity, respect for others, and trust building within the organization, with the Board, and stakeholders. Proactively drives an organization to a higher level of performance, efficiency, and growth through inspiring action and commitment for best results.
- **Influence in the Marketplace:** The CEO has growth mindset, builds and cultivates network of relationships, is influential and leverages United Way's unique position to proactively increase visibility, reputation, and competitive advantage that generates interest, passion for investing in community. Successfully navigates the complex dynamics of local, regional, and national environment.
- **Grow Business and Revenue:** The CEO possesses a high-level of business acumen and broad management skillset, is effective at generating and growing financial support for the organization. Is able to raise funds by effectively engaging and linking a variety of donors (individuals, corporations, major giving, and other segments) and volunteers to inform and contribute to advancing the mission.
- **Partnership Mindset and Network-Oriented:** The CEO has a partnership mindset: s/he values and leverages the power of networks; Is leveraging the 1,800+ United Ways, its collective buying power, 11,000+ employees, 30,000+ board members, and United Way's breadth of community presence, relationships, and strategies. Provides leadership at the local, regional, national, and global level.

CORE for All Staff

- **Mission-Focused:** The United Way Pro's top priority is to create real social change that leads to better lives and healthier communities. This competency drives their performance and professional motivations.

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- **Relationship-Oriented:** The United Way Pro understands that people come before process and is astute in cultivating and managing relationships toward a common goal.
- **Collaborator:** The United Way Pro understands the roles and contributions of all sectors of the community and can mobilize resources (financial and human) through meaningful engagement.
- **Results-Driven:** The United Way Pro is dedicated to shared and measurable goals for the common good; creating, resourcing, scaling, and leveraging strategies and innovations for broad investment and impact.
- **Brand Steward:** The United Way Pro is a steward of the brand and understands his/her role in growing and protecting the reputation and results of the greater network.

Customizing CEO Competencies for Your United Way

You need to customize the competency model to reflect the unique needs of your organization. Board Leaders must work to select competencies (attributes and behaviors) from the model that are critical to the success of the organization. We recommend you consider the relative importance of the attributes and behaviors for each competency set based on your United Way's unique needs and goals.

Board Leaders should discuss and review competencies and attributes for United Way Chief Executive Officer. All five CEO specific competency sets are important – you should work to customize attributes and behaviors.

Carefully review each attribute and behaviors, discuss and consider what is most important for your United Way, the factors that affect and drive your United Way's performance in successfully advancing the mission. Those attributes and behaviors reflecting the unique needs and requirements for your United Way should be selected and used in the Chief Executive Officer Competency model for your United Way.

The Board may decide some that are not in the competency model – however, highly important for unique needs and requirements of your United Way.

- Enter all five CEO competencies (all competencies are important for the role, not negotiable).
- Discuss and rate attributes, using "H" (high importance) to identify those that are absolutely critical to your United Way's success at this time.
- Next, rate the rest of the attributes either "M" (medium importance at this time) or "L" (low importance at this time).
- All competencies are important, and the attributes you rate an "H" should be used to drive your hiring and/or continuing development efforts.
- "Core Competencies" are mandatory for ALL United Way professionals.

Competency	Attribute	Rating: H, M, L
(e.g. – Visionary)	*Is visionary thinker*	
	Inspirational and persuasive communicator	
	Displays courage, resilience and entrepreneurial spirit	

UNITED WAY TALENT MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES

Competencies for working toward a world of economic and social opportunity for all

Volunteer Leadership Competency Model

Volunteer Leadership Core Competencies

STRATEGIC THINKER	
Description	The United Way Board provides thought-leadership and expertise in developing a path to achieve the strategic goals of the organization.
Attributes	• Sees the big picture, envisions and champions activities that lead to significant achievement for the organization and community • Ensures a healthy exchange of ideas inclusive of diverse perspectives • Is well–informed about economic, human, and community dynamics • Protects against mission-drift • Is a practitioner of a good governance • Embraces change and innovation; rewards entrepreneurial efforts
Behavior Indicators	• Engages in continuous learning and discussion on community data and dynamics during regular board meetings. • Dedicates United Way resources to evidence-based strategies or promising practices aligned with mission. • Ask questions that provoke deep discussions and strategic reflection to address and resolve problems in communities in an innovative ways. • Ties operational discussions to strategic objectives. • Analyzes and embraces risk as appropriate to create opportunities and maximize results for the organization.
CONNECTS LEADERS to LEADERS	
Description	The United Way Board values talent as a key to success and attracts and develops key leaders and partnerships.
Attributes	• Maintains effective and productive relationship with the CEO and staff, mindful that the CEO has principle responsibility and authority over staff. • Creates partnerships within community and actively engages other leaders in the work. • Ensures multi-cultural leadership throughout United Way. • Provides for a pipeline of next-generation board leaders.
Behavior Indicators	• Introduces United Way staff to key players who can assist in community mobilization efforts. • Crafts and actively engages in leadership development strategies to cultivate future board leadership. • Assesses diversity in leadership and develops strategies to improve it. • Frequently advocates for United Way's mission and strategies to other community leaders.

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ATTRIBUTES OF HIGH-PERFORMING BOARD & CEO PARTNERSHIP

BOARD COMPETENCY MODEL	ATTRIBUTES OF HIGH-PERFORMING BOARD AND CEO PARTNERSHIP
Board Specific: ■ Strategic Thinker ■ Connects Leaders to Leaders ■ Advocate for Community ■ Future Focused ■ Steward of Brand and Trust Core Competency for ALL United Way Staff (including Boards and CEOs): ■ Mission Focused ■ Relationship Oriented ■ Collaborator ■ Results Driven ■ Brand Steward	■ **Measures** United Way performance on impact, revenue, supporters (advocates, donors, volunteers), and trust goals. ■ **Connects** impact efforts, revenue growth and investors, and resource development (e.g. financial, relationships) in order to achieve community results at scale. ■ **Engages** on and is highly informed about community issues, including advocating and/or influencing public policy as a critical function. ■ **Prioritizes** strategic and generative issues as opposed to focusing mostly on operational and fiduciary matters. ■ **Leverages** the board as the key talent asset of United Way, and attracts, assesses, develops and engages Board leaders as such. ■ **Values** the strength of and connects with opportunities within the United Way network, and is actively partnering with Board leaders from other United Ways to drive results on common issues.

WHAT IS NEXT: ROLL-OUT STRATEGY 2014-2015

- Engage Network: Socialize High-Performing Boards Initiative and Attributes
- Strengthen Capacity: Create strong platform of quality development and learning
- Build Champions: Build Community Champions, made up of Board Leaders and CEOs
- Connect Boards: Strengthen and Scale Board-to-Board Connections

ABOUT UNITED WAY "BOARD WALK"

- United Way Board Walk (online.unitedway.org/BoardWalk) is your first step toward creating a High-Performance Board and CEO partnership.
- Complete "Attributes Self-Assessment": online.unitedway.org/BoardAttributesSelfAssessment
- Have a discussion with your Board and / or CEO
- Leverage United Way Online: "Board Walk" to connect with other CEOs and Board leaders in the network

START YOUR "WALK" HERE

RESOURCES
online.uniteway.org/BoardWalk
online.unitedway.org/BoardAttributesSelfAssessment
online.unitedway.org/StrategicPlanning

For more information
Irena Djordjevic-Behery
Vice President,
Talent Management
United Way Worldwide
talent@unitedway.org
703.836.7112 ext. 523

Appendix J – United Way High Performing Boards and CEOs

United Way Worldwide
Board Development

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UNITED WAY HIGH-PERFORMING BOARDS & CEOS: A PARTNERSHIP THAT DRIVES RESULTS

The Attributes of the High-Performing Board & CEO Partnership

CONTEXT

The United Way network engages around 30,000 Board members from around the world. This incredible group of leaders has the enormous potential and influence to create transformational change on critical education, income, and health issues worldwide.

To achieve impact and growth at scale, we need the right leadership in place. In order for United Way to deepen our local, national, and worldwide impact, we need to expand and leverage the full power and leadership capabilities and capacity of our Boards and CEOs by working together in partnership.

OUR POINT OF VIEW: A BOARD & CEO PARTNERSHIP

In order to have a high-performing organization, an organization must have a high-performing Board, a high-performing CEO, and the two working in partnership. We know that when a Board and its CEO work interdependently and collaboratively our capacity to affect change grows. This leads to setting extraordinary goals, far-reaching and comprehensive strategic plans and, ultimately, outstanding results for each community.

In driving a decade-long change effort to support United Ways toward becoming community change catalysts, we have learned how important it is to convene partners and measure results. To deepen our local, regional national, and worldwide impact, we need to expand the leadership capacity of our Boards and CEOs by forging a working partnership that extends beyond basic governance and leverages the extraordinary personal and professional assets that Board members bring to their role.

The **foundational elements of a successful Board Development strategy** are:

- **Board and CEO partnership** for high-performance and results
- Identify and engage **right Board** members
- Effective Board **governance** model and practices

The **Board and CEO partnership** is founded on strong governance practices, elevated by a commitment to shared community goals. Together, the Board and CEO:

- Co-author a shared, high-impact strategic direction for delivering on the United Way value proposition.
- Secure and invest adequate resources to build the organizational capacity, including volunteer and staff capability, to execute the strategy.
- Embrace change and proactively make tough decisions, course-correcting as needed.
- Commit to and be accountable for scaled community results.

Revised March 2016 Version 2.0

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WHY THE BOARD AND CEO PARTNERSHIP MATTERS

The Attributes of the High-Performing Board and CEO partnership define what it takes to lead the organization to achieve high performance and results for United Way at local and network levels. The Attributes are intended to be the next level, beyond the basic expectations of Board and CEO responsibilities (e.g., fiduciary, governance, legal). They serve as the "true north" – key behaviors and performance drivers of an effective United Way Board and CEO partnership. They are interconnected and consistent with the United Way Board Competency Model and the United Way CEO Competency Model.

To accelerate successful execution of the United Way Business Model, the Board and CEO in partnership:

ATTRIBUTES	WHY IT MATTERS
❑ SET DIRECTION AND MEASURE PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS	A strong Board and CEO partnership allows for clear targets and a more objective review of progress. The Board and CEO partnership can grow in critical areas as a result of clear measurement, course correction, and related targeted action.
❑ DEEPEN RELEVANCE IN COMMUNITY	A strong Board and CEO partnership leverages relationships and knowledge about issues to influence policy and grow resources, producing quicker and more sustained movement on impact goals.
❑ PRIORITIZE TIME ON STRATEGY	A strong Board and CEO partnership, with its attention firmly on strategic issues and not shying away from adaptive challenges, leverages its time to optimize positive community change.
❑ GROW REVENUE AND DONORS	A strong Board and CEO partnership ensures that resource development is directly tied to community impact efforts, strategies and outcomes. New investors become engaged and relationships are deepened leading to sustained revenue and volunteer streams.
❑ LEVERAGE THE BOARD AS A KEY TALENT ASSET	A strong Board and CEO partnership builds and grows talent, and strengthens the organization, driving operational improvements and greater results in resource growth and community impact.
❑ ENGAGE WITH THE NETWORK	A strong Board and CEO partnership is connected to the broader United Way network as this approach delivers support and strategies that accelerate progress and drive toward high impact results by shortening learning curves and opening up new opportunities.

Attributes vs. Competency model

- *The Attributes of the High-Performing Board and CEO Partnership describe the characteristics of the highest performing Board and CEO partnership – looking at the Board and CEO relationship in its entirety.*
- *The Competency Models (Board and CEO) describe key behaviors that every United Way Board member and CEO is expected to display as an effective leader of United Way. Competency models are used to identify, recruit, develop, and assess performance of United Way leaders.*

ATTRIBUTES SELF-ASSESSMENT

CONTEXT

The Attributes of a High-Performing Board and CEO Partnership: Self-Assessment is designed for the United Way Board and CEO to gain an understanding of how they partner to enable high-performance of the Board and organization. It is designed to help you reflect on where your Board currently is and where development opportunities exist.

This Self-Assessment is designed around the Attributes of the High-Performing Board and CEO Partnership, which are the qualities and behaviors exhibited by the Board and CEO that drive higher impact in their communities. The Attributes are above and beyond the characteristics of a standard board.

Note: the Attributes in this assessment are about the board as a whole unit. The Attributes are not expected to be present in the same way for each individual board member. The goal is for the board to have the range of skills and capacities that enable it to succeed as a unit on these attributes. For competencies and assessments in regard to the individual, we encourage you to review the Board (Volunteer Leader) Competency Model, the CEO Competency Model, and Board Composition Matrix.

In order to have a high-performing organization, an organization must have a high-performing Board, a high-performing CEO, and the two working in partnership. We know that when a Board and its CEO work interdependently and collaboratively our capacity to affect change grows. This leads to setting extraordinary goals, far-reaching and comprehensive strategic plans and, ultimately, outstanding results for each community.

INSTRUCTIONS

For best results, we recommend the following steps*:
*Note: The Assessment is taken within Step 2 of the process for "Steps for Using the Attributes" in adopting the Attributes outlined in page 2 of this document.

1. Provide copies of the Attributes Self-Assessment for each Board member and the CEO.
2. Have every Board member and the CEO anonymously rank how they view the partnership between the board (as a unit) and CEO on each attribute's accompanying behaviors.
3. Have a staff member collate the responses on the summary sheet (below), calculating the average for each item.
4. After collating the results or at the next full board meeting, engage the board in a discussion about the results. Suggested discussion questions are provided with each Attribute online and within "The Attributes of the High-Performing Board & CEO Partnership" document.
5. Continue to advance through the "How We Make This Work Real" action steps with "Step 3: Commit to an enhanced approach and a different conversation" (see pg. 2).

STEPS FOR USING THE ATTRIBUTES

Using the Attributes is a more effective way to accelerate the work you are already doing to develop the Board and improve overall engagement. We recommend using the Attributes and accompanying self-assessment as part of your Board's Strategic Planning Session either as a full Board or in small-group working meetings utilizing the following steps. In partnership, the Board and the CEO should consider the following opportunities to engage and implement the Attributes:

STEP 1: ENGAGE IN DISCUSSION ABOUT HOW YOUR BOARD WORKS

Ask Board members and host an honest, open conversation about:

- What are the important community issues?
- How might our organization work on these issues with greater impact?
- How might we spend our Board's time for greater impact?
- How do we more fully utilize the talents of our Board members?

Some Boards may benefit from a candid conversation that starts with these questions:

- Is our United Way deeply involved in improving our community's conditions, influencing policy and driving measurable results?
- Is our United Way consistently bringing in more revenue and donors?
- Is a seat on our Board a coveted position in our community? Do we consistently have high attendance and active engagement at our Board meetings?

STEP 2: SELF-ASSESS YOUR BOARD & CEO PARTNERSHIP

- Use the "Attributes of a High-Performing Board and CEO Partnership Self-Assessment"
- Engage Board members in open and honest conversations about where your Board is and what is possible with greater engagement around the Attributes.
- Note: Sample questions to help initiate and guide your discussion are provided under each Attribute.

STEP 3: COMMIT TO AN ENHANCED APPROACH AND A DIFFERENT CONVERSATION

- Make a decision to commit to the Attributes of the High-Performing Board and CEO Partnership.
- Focus on those three to five behaviors that, if implemented, will deliver results for your United Way and community.
- Note: working in Partnership may be a departure from your current procedures and behaviors – it is a different method than what many Board members and CEOs are used to – but the results of the Partnership are evident.

STEP 4: CONTINUOUS AND ONGOING PROCESS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Adopt the Attributes of the High-Performing Board and CEO Partnership as a formal component of your governance framework.
- Commit to a plan and regularly reflect on the progress and evolution of partnership, and explore opportunities for an ongoing and continuous strengthening and improvement.
- Join conversations (online, conferences, meetings) with leaders from other United Ways about growing a Board and CEO Partnership and a high-impact United Way.
- Engage in strategic dialogues about how to strengthen and grow the impact of your Board, the CEO, and the organization.

Appendix K – CNUW Strategic plan Summary

Corona-Norco United Way
Strategic Planning Day
Thursday, April 28, 2016

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

Developed by CNUW Board

[redacted]

PLANNING DAY ATTENDEES

[redacted]

STAFF

[redacted]

Facilitator

[redacted]

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

- Facilitato[redacted]et personally with all Corona-Norco United Way Board Members prior to the planning[redacted]et with the Executive Director several times and with the Administrative Assistant once.
- The intent of these conversations was to pr[redacted]ckground information and perspectives on CNUW; to prompt the CNUW board members and staff to begin thinking about the planning process; and to get to know the board members and staff prior to the planning day itself so that Jim and the board members and staff would not be strangers on the planning day.

- A separate meeting was held with the Strategic Planning Committee, also prior to the Planning Day, at which Jim presented a draft of the Planning Day agenda and solicited their input as to the process for that day. Jim also presented a document to the committee with his thoughts and observations subsequent to the interview process with board members and staff. (This document is in the hands of all Board members.)
- About two weeks prior to the Planning Day an expanded agenda was sent to the Board. This included a set of questions for board members to give preliminary thought to before the main event on 4/28.
- The planning day began with ice-breaking personal introductions and an establishment of a framework of agreements that would constitute the working relationships for the group.
- Hoped for outcomes for the day were then shared by everyone. (These are listed below.)
- A brief time was spent addressing the Mission Statement of CNUW, giving attention to how satisfactorily it met the three primary components of an effective Mission Statement:
    - What is the primary service or product of the organization?
    - Who is the primary audience of the organization?
    - What is the organization's distinctive? In what does it excel?
        - (The results of that discussion are shared below.)
- Jim Weaver identified that the planning day would focus on four Core Impact Areas (CIA's):
    - Board of Directors
    - Fund Development
    - Program
    - Marketing/P.R.
- The board was then broken up into four small group think tanks for a SWOT Analysis, with each group addressing one of the four CIA's listed above. Each group developed a set of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for its assigned CIA. Following a break, each small group presented its findings with the full group. (These are listed below.)

The bulk of the time for the remainder of the day was then devoted to identifying goals, people responsible and timelines within each of the four Core Impact Areas.

HOPED FOR OUTCOMES

The Board's expressions of their hoped for outcomes for the Strategic Planning Day:

- **Clarity**
- **Unified Voice**
- **Expectations of the Board of Directors**
- **A Roadmap for the Future**
- **Actionable Items**
- **Measurable Goals**
- **Accountability**
- **Timetable**

NOTE:
In the listing of the goals on the following pages, lettering in green indicates the individuals and/or groups who will be the champions and drivers of that particular goal.

Lettering in red indicates the timeline for either the completion of the goal or for the convening of the group who will take the next steps toward the achievement of the goal.

MISSION STATEMENT **Corona-Norco United Way**
"Corona-Norco United Way engages the community to support and teach individuals toward educational success, financial stability, healthful living and independence." • **After discussion on possible adjustments to the Mission Statement, George agreed to lead an Ad Hoc Task Force comprised of himself, Dean and Allen to address possible changes to the statement and to bring any recommended changes to the Board Meeting on May 25th.**

SWOT ANALYSIS
Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities - Threats

SWOT ANALYSIS **CNUW Programs**
PROGRAM STRENGTHS – WHAT CNUW IS DOING WELL The Program Small Group first identified the programs in existence: • Internal: GED & Financial Stability Classes • External: Inspire, CNRM, PR, Teen Parent, 211, Big Brothers-Big Sisters, Settlement House **STRENGTHS:** • Having its own programs allows CNUW to maintain a level of control • CNUW has a long-term well-established presence in the community, fostering credibility • Size of the Board of Directors
PROGRAM WEAKNESSES – AREAS OF NEEDED IMPROVEMENT FOR CNUW • Management: Internal – lack of staffing • Management: External – lack of oversight on external programs • CNUW is a minor player for some of its external non-profit programs • External programs draw funds from CNUW's internal programs and their potential • Additional funding needed for internal programs • Additional staffing needed for internal programs

PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

- CNUW credibility has opportunity to influence how other organizations spend donor funding.
- Program expansion opportunities
- Opportunities to partner with other service organizations, corporations and major donors
- New financial education opportunities
- Need = opportunity

PROGRAM THREATS

- Lack of adequate funding
- Demands on Executive Director's time
- Competition with other non-profits for funding
- Declining grant funds

SWOT ANALYSIS
CNUW Fund Development

FUND DEVELOPMENT STRENGTHS – WHAT CNUW IS DOING WELL

- United Way brand and positive reputation
- [redacted]strong relationships in the community
- Supportive Board of Directors
- Quality and commitment of the CNUW Staff

FUND DEVELOPMENT WEAKNESSES – AREAS OF NEEDED IMPROVEMENT

- Inadequate reporting of numbers and outcomes to community as to how funds are used
- Lack of fund development metrics
- Inadequate reporting to Board as to utilization of funds
- Need to view Board as ongoing support, rather than simply monthly reporting
- Need to be more transparent to Board and community
- Limited staffing and volunteers for fund development
- More Board involvement needed outside of board meetings
- Executive Director needs to leverage Board Member capabilities to a greater degree for programs, events and campaigns.
- Inadequate marketing and public relations

FUND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNTIES

- "Packaging" of a program need
- Community culture of giving and support
- Credible and healthy United Way brand in the community
- Strong potential for growth of programs
- Producing a "Donor Report Card." HHYDMD ="How Have Your Donations Made a Difference?"
- Grant funding available for internal programs
- Small to mid-size communities can be tapped for program funding
- Diversifying the Board to gain additional skill sets and expertise

FUND DEVELOPMENT THREATS
• Competition with other non-profits for funds • Duplication of services within the community • Potential negative press if and when there is a lack of transparency • Private Foundations seeking of funds

SWOT ANALYSIS CNUW Board of Directors
BOARD OF DIRECTORS STRENGTHS – WHAT CNUW IS DOING WELL
• Varied representation • Size appropriate • Participative • Knowledgeable • Committed • Representation of youth • Longevity
BOARD OF DIRECTORS WEAKNESSES – AREAS OF NEEDED IMPROVEMENT
• Educating those outside the organization as to what the role of the Board is • Lack of representation from cities other than Corona • Communication within the Board and to Board members outside the monthly meetings • Use of technology for communications within/to the Board, e.g. Blog • Orientation and training of Board members needs to be strengthened • Lack of clear time and funding expectations for Board members • Board meeting structure could be more succinct and productive • Need representative from large local corporation
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OPPORTUNITIES
• Seek participation from larger local corporation(s) (Resources, Finances, Time) • Enhanced use of social media, e.g. Instagram, Blog for Board members • Describe role of Board and Board members on CNUW web site • Become the go-to non-profit because of the presence of the CNUW Board • Clarification of expectations and roles will result in an even more committed Board
BOARD OF DIRECTORS THREATS
• Lack of communication • Lack of clarity • Lack of purpose and direction • Other non-profits with strong board presence in the community • Other non-profit commitments on the part of CNUW Board members
NOTE: Board Members are: Governors; Consultants; Ambassadors; Sponsors (From Peter Drucker's "Managing the Non-Profit Organization")

SWOT ANALYSIS
CNUW Marketing and P.R.

MARKETING STRENGTHS – WHAT CNUW IS DOING WELL

- Brand and name recognition
- Well-established organization with long history in the community
- Quantifiable success stories in CNUW programs, e.g. GED program
- Partnerships with community entities, e.g. City of Corona, CNUSD, etc.
- Existence of other United Way chapters' strategies into which CNUW can tap

MARKETING WEAKNESSES – AREAS OF NEEDED IMPROVEMENT

- Lack of presence and activity on social media and the web
- Need for someone to manage CNUW's social media presence
- Lack of booth presence at city events, e.g. Day of the Child; Great Road Race
- Lack of staff person focusing attention on social media
- Lack of marketing materials
- Not publicizing success stories adequately, e.g. GED success stories
- Lack of allocation of funds for marketing. No marketing budget item.
- Lack of marketing to Norco and Eastvale
- Inadequate information and transparency on how donated funds are being spent on specific programs vis-a-vis overhead
- No signature fundraising event to bring attention to CNUW
- Size of Board – room for expansion for someone with marketing skills

MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

- Being more transparent by marketing how the funds raised are being spent
- Include students in community outreach events, e.g. Day of the Child
- Capitalize on the various community events by being present with information
- Partnering with other non-profits with similar goals, e.g. Friends of the Library
- Consider a CNUW signature event, e.g. the community's Lobster Fest and CNUW's previous Golf Tournament
- Partner with churches and recovery centers
- Expand Board to include representatives from Norco and Eastvale
- Collaborate with the three Chambers of Commerce to market CNUW programs through Chamber members
- Market GED program to manufacturing companies in communities
- Capitalize on GED graduate testimonials

MARKETING THREATS

- Competing with new non-profits for funds
- Lack of marketing diminishes CNUW's brand recognition and "market share" in the community

GOAL SETTING

SMART GOALS

As a prelude to establishing goals, the group reminded itself of the well-known SMART goals concept. All goals should be:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Timebound

GOALS
CNUW Board of Directors

- Clarify the roles of the Board and of Board Members
- Develop a Board Manual
- Establish a formal orientation and training for new Board members
- Diversify the composition of the Board
- Identify additional skills that would be valuable to the Board
- Seek possible Board members from Norco and Eastvale
- Seek a possible Board member from a major local corporation
- Add two new Board members by the end of calendar year 2016
- Add two additional Board members by the end of calendar year 2017
- **Establish a Board Development Committee[redacted]reed to convene this Committe[redacted]eed to serve on it. Committee will convene no later than May 16. The Board Development Committee will be responsible for overseeing the development of roles and expectations of Board members and for vetting new Board members. This Committee will bring recommendations for potential new Board members to the July 27 Board meeting**
- Review and update CNUW's bylaws. [redacted] agreed to convene a Bylaws Review Ad Hoc Task F[redacted]olunteered to serve on this Task Force. [redacted] also agreed to review the bylaws and make recommendations. This Task Force will meet no later than May 16 and will bring recommendations for bylaws changes to the June 25th Board meeting.
- Consider adding 15 minutes to each Board meeting for Strategic Thinking and Planning

GOALS
CNUW Fund Development

NOTE: The bulk of donations worldwide generate from individual donors. Offering internally-run programs allows CNUW to procure donor funds and grant monies for specific programs.

- Develop materials that inform potential donors. Have transparency in communications with current and potential donors. Show how needs are being met.
- Identify potential donors in the community.
- Diversify revenue sources
- Develop focused giving opportunities
- Develop and implement a signature fundraising event
- Mobilize additional volunteers for fundraising
- Clarify the role of Board members for both giving and procuring funds
- Clarify the Executive Director's role in fundraising. (Allen says that 50% of his time is currently allocated to fundraising. With role redefinition that will likely rise to 80%.)
- **Establish a Fund Development Committee. [redacted]greed to lead the Fund Development Committee. [redacted]o agreed to serve on the Committee. This Committee will meet no later than May 16 and will bring recommendations to the full Board by the July 27 Board meeting.**
- (It should be noted that the Fund Development Committee does not bear the responsibility in itself for raising the necessary funds for CNUW. This Committee's charge is to provide oversight to Fund Development and to recommend strategies for the accomplishment of the above goals.)

GOALS
CNUW Marketing

- Consider outsourcing Marketing functions
- **Determine a budget for Marketing**
- Investigate a possible pro-bono Marketing source
- Identify a Social Media expert
- **Review all Marketing materials and revise as needed**
- Review web site, Facebook and other electronic media and update as needed
- Develop talking points (elevator speech) for all Board members
- Secure feedback from community
- **Develop a Marketing Plan**
- **Establish a Marketing and Public Relations Committee. [redacted]agreed to convene the Marketing/P.R. Committee. [redacted]e agreed to serve on this Committee. (While absent, [redacted] later added to the Committee, pending her consent.) The first meeting of this Committee will be no later than June 1st. Recommendations for a Marketing budget, for updating marketing materials and for a marketing plan will be brought to the Board at its June 22nd meeting.**

GOALS
CNUW Programs and Staffing

- Define a position description for the new Community Impact Manager (CIM)
- Develop a compensation package for the Community Impact Manager
- Hire the Community Impact Manager by September 1st, 2016
- Develop a plan to relate to agencies and to keep them informed of future plans
- Determine agency funding
- **Establish a Program Committee [redacted] volunteered to chair the Program Committee. [redacted] agreed to serve on the Committee. The first meeting of this Committee will be held no later than May 16. This Committee will bring recommendations to the Board by the May Board meeting. Recommendations will include: a plan for agency funding; a plan to communicate this plan to agencies; a position description for the CIM; and a compensation package for the CIM.**

CNUW Strategic Plan
Overall Driver and Champion

[redacted]greed, with unanimous support of the full Board, to be the overall driver of the Strategic Plan as outlined above.

[redacted] will be to hold accountable all those who agreed to handle specific tasks and responsibilities in this plan.

[redacted] will oversee the time components as developed in the above plan. He has agreed to develop a master calendar for the various ingredients in a plan.

Given the fact that a Strategic Plan is a living document and as such it will need revision and adjustments going forward, Bernie will provide oversight to the Board for such changes.

ONE WORD DESCRIPTIONS BY CNUW BOARD MEMBERS OF CNUW'S BOARD'S WORK TODAY

Unity……Productive……..Clarity……Collaborative…….....Comfortable
Direction……Committed……Energizing……Fun

Appendix L – CNUW Strategic plan Update

Corona-Norco United Way

CORONA NORCO UNITED WAY STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Submitted by [redacted], CEO

1.) Existing Plan

a. CEO and Staff are not aware of the plan
b. Not currently in use
c. Old goals and no objectives
d. Some objectives met:
    i. Develop Board Manual
    ii. Add new Board Members by end 2016
    iii. Add new Board Members by end 2017

2.) Goals and Objectives: Goals are defined as guidelines of what we want to do. **Objectives** are defined as specific, measurable and time defined action items used to meet the goals. Below are new goals and objectives identified by the CNUW Staff. Please note: there may be some overlap with the current Strategic Plan, but this is what was identified organically.

GOAL: Accounting and Financial Records

a) Identify, track and log all revenue streams
b) Identify track and log all expenditures
c) Ensure all account codes are aligned with organization

GOAL: E-filing System

a) Ensure all records are saved electronically from the past
b) Develop an organized electronic filing system with appropriate folders

GOAL: Website Update

a) Cancel existing provider and utilize a user friendly and modern platform
b) Ensure all pages are available in different languages
c) Make website visually pleasing
d) Ensure all data and narratives are accurate

GOAL: Develop Stronger Partnerships in the CNUW Service Area

a) This includes Corona, Norco, Eastvale, Jurupa Valley, Home Gardens, Coronita, El Cerrito and Temescal Valley
b) Attend meetings, events, etc.
c) Determine what each community needs and compare that to what we can provide

d) Build trust and keep constant communication

GOAL: Social Media Strategy

a) Develop a comprehensive Social Media strategy
   i. Who are we, what do we want to say, when, to who and how
b) Consistent branding: colors, fonts, overall feel
c) Utilize analytics and technology to leverage communications

GOAL: Program Data and Analytics

a) Obtain a Customer Relations Management (CRM) system to capture accurate data for all programs
b) Perform analysis on a continual basis for effectiveness, equity, demographics, needs, grant acquisition, and more

GOAL: Update Collateral and Information

a) Update brochures, flyers, handouts, etc.
b) Acquire CNUW logo attire for Board Members, Youth Board, Staff and Volunteers

GOAL: Develop a Footprint in the Community

a) Become a "go-to" not only in our service area, but in the Region
b) Universal through word of mouth and digitally
c) Become known for what we do and how we do it

GOAL: Policy Updates

a) Evaluate the need for new policies (i.e. emergency planning, succession planning, etc.)
b) Evaluate current policies and update as necessary

GOAL: Volunteer/Intern Program

a) Develop a volunteer/intern program that focuses on a quality experience
b) Keep track of hours
c) Develop a volunteer banquet/recognition ceremony

GOAL: Redefine, Rebuild and Grow

a) We need to identify who we are and what we do
b) The past several years have brought many changes that have clouded the vision
c) COVID-19 has also changed the need of the community and what we do
d) We want to focus on QUALITY over quantity with our services and all we do
e) We want to be known for our humanistic, "hands-on" approach
f) Remove unnecessary programs

GOAL: Fundraising, Campaigning and Grants

a) Capitalize on grant opportunities

b) Train staff on grant research, writing and administration
c) Identify businesses in the community that we do not campaign with
d) Repair any damaged relationships
e) Offer transparency with how funds are used
f) Develop and send follow up letters to donors and sponsors
g) Maintain donation management software

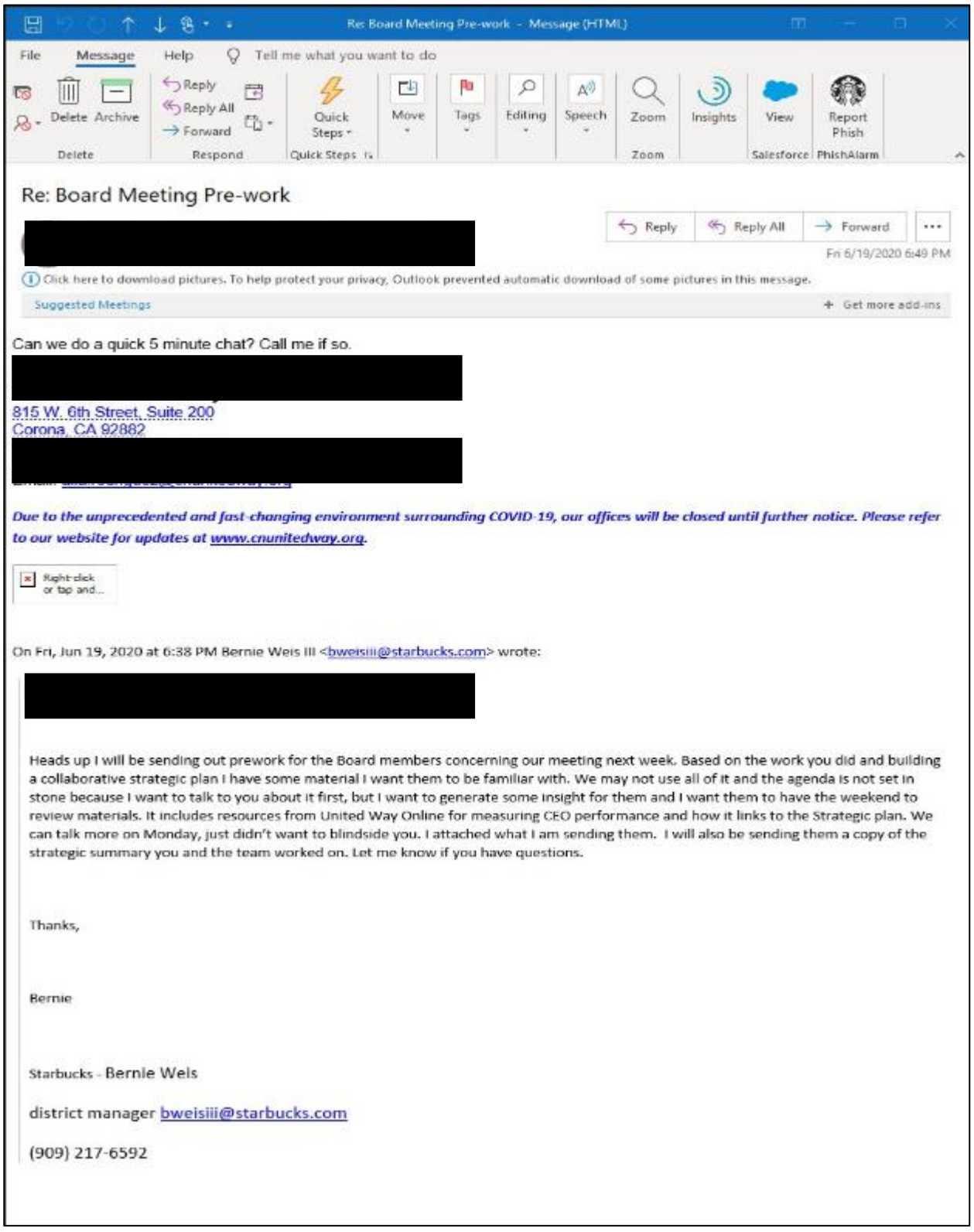
GOAL: Board of Directors

a) Role Clarity
    ii. Educate current Board Members on job description and implement training
    iii. Train new and incoming Board Members
    iv. Create onboarding checklist
    v. New Board Member orientation
b) Board Diversity
    i. Business Community
    ii. Demographics
    iii. Reflects the community
    iv. Varied skillset and experiences

GOAL: Staff Training

a) CPR
b) Community Diversity
c) Professional Development
d) Grant research, writing and administration
e) Equity and Fairness
f) Domestic Violence Laws and Practices
g) Mental Health
h) Non-Profit Finances, Accounting, Fundraising
i) Public Speaking

Appendix M – Pre-Work Informal CEO-President Email



Re: Board Meeting Pre-work - Message (HTML)

File Message Help Tell me what you want to do

Delete Archive Reply Reply All Forward Quick Steps Move Tags Editing Speech Zoom Insights View Report Phish

Delete Respond Quick Steps Zoom Salesforce PhishAlarm

Re: Board Meeting Pre-work

[redacted]

Reply Reply All Forward

Fri 6/19/2020 6:49 PM

Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

Suggested Meetings + Get more add-ins

Can we do a quick 5 minute chat? Call me if so.

[redacted]

815 W. 6th Street, Suite 200
Corona, CA 92882

[redacted]

Due to the unprecedented and fast-changing environment surrounding COVID-19, our offices will be closed until further notice. Please refer to our website for updates at www.cnunitedway.org.

Right-click or tap and...

On Fri, Jun 19, 2020 at 6:38 PM Bernie Weis III <bweisiii@starbucks.com> wrote:

[redacted]

Heads up I will be sending out prework for the Board members concerning our meeting next week. Based on the work you did and building a collaborative strategic plan I have some material I want them to be familiar with. We may not use all of it and the agenda is not set in stone because I want to talk to you about it first, but I want to generate some insight for them and I want them to have the weekend to review materials. It includes resources from United Way Online for measuring CEO performance and how it links to the Strategic plan. We can talk more on Monday, just didn't want to blindside you. I attached what I am sending them. I will also be sending them a copy of the strategic summary you and the team worked on. Let me know if you have questions.

Thanks,

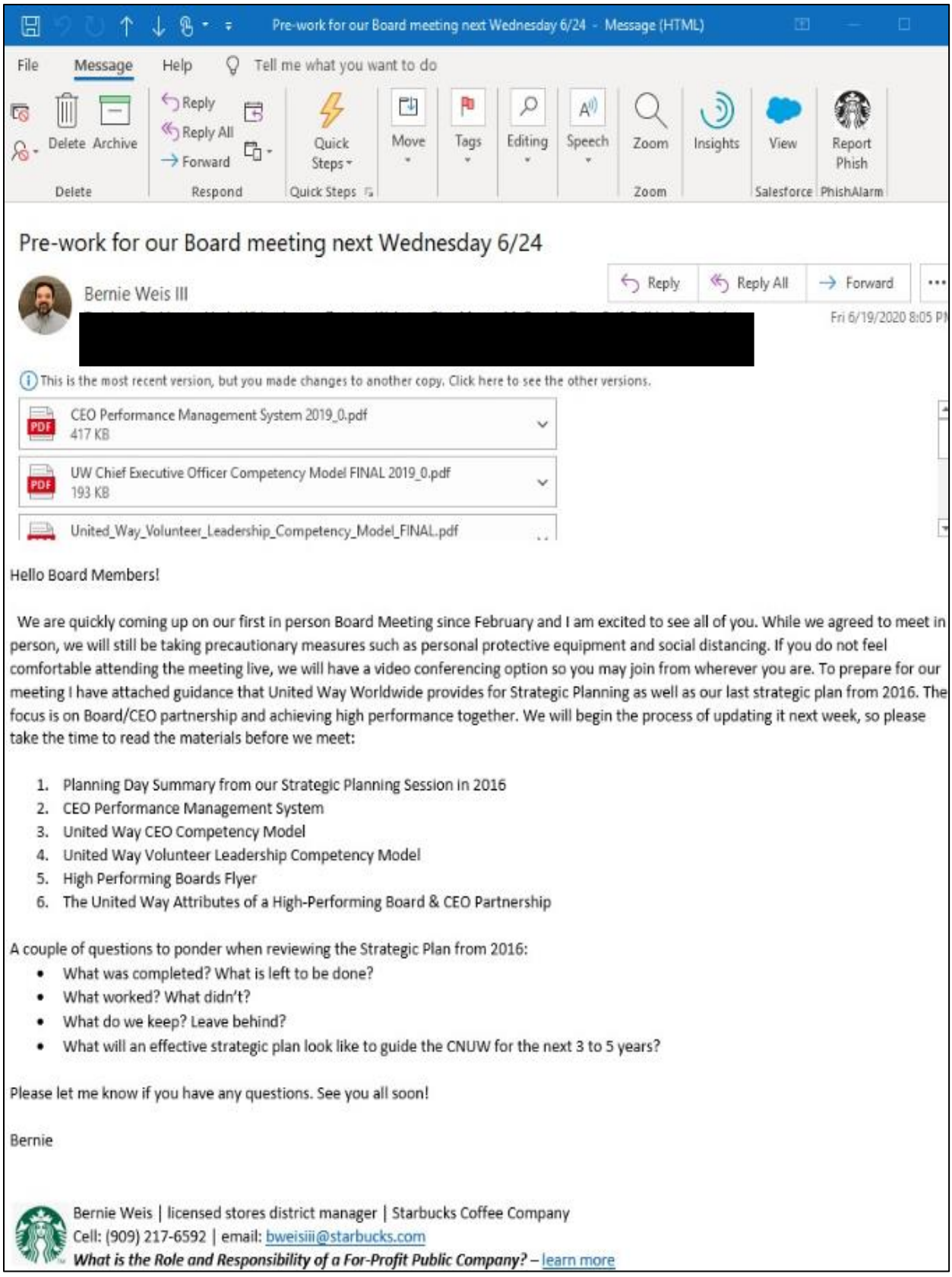
Bernie

Starbucks - Bernie Weis

district manager bweisiii@starbucks.com

(909) 217-6592

Appendix N – Pre-Work for Board Meeting



Pre-work for our Board meeting next Wednesday 6/24 - Message (HTML)

File Message Help Tell me what you want to do

Delete Archive Reply Reply All Forward Quick Steps Move Tags Editing Speech Zoom Insights View Report Phish

Delete Respond Quick Steps Zoom Salesforce PhishAlarm

Pre-work for our Board meeting next Wednesday 6/24

Bernie Weis III [redacted]

Reply Reply All Forward

Fri 6/19/2020 8:05 PM

This is the most recent version, but you made changes to another copy. Click here to see the other versions.

CEO Performance Management System 2019_0.pdf 417 KB

UW Chief Executive Officer Competency Model FINAL 2019_0.pdf 193 KB

United_Way_Volunteer_Leadership_Competency_Model_FINAL.pdf

Hello Board Members!

We are quickly coming up on our first in person Board Meeting since February and I am excited to see all of you. While we agreed to meet in person, we will still be taking precautionary measures such as personal protective equipment and social distancing. If you do not feel comfortable attending the meeting live, we will have a video conferencing option so you may join from wherever you are. To prepare for our meeting I have attached guidance that United Way Worldwide provides for Strategic Planning as well as our last strategic plan from 2016. The focus is on Board/CEO partnership and achieving high performance together. We will begin the process of updating it next week, so please take the time to read the materials before we meet:

1. Planning Day Summary from our Strategic Planning Session in 2016
2. CEO Performance Management System
3. United Way CEO Competency Model
4. United Way Volunteer Leadership Competency Model
5. High Performing Boards Flyer
6. The United Way Attributes of a High-Performing Board & CEO Partnership

A couple of questions to ponder when reviewing the Strategic Plan from 2016:

- What was completed? What is left to be done?
- What worked? What didn't?
- What do we keep? Leave behind?
- What will an effective strategic plan look like to guide the CNUW for the next 3 to 5 years?

Please let me know if you have any questions. See you all soon!

Bernie

Bernie Weis | licensed stores district manager | Starbucks Coffee Company
Cell: (909) 217-6592 | email: bweisiii@starbucks.com
What is the Role and Responsibility of a For-Profit Public Company? – learn more

Appendix O – CNUW Strategic plan Revised Draft

Corona-Norco United Way

Corona Norco United Way Strategic Plan
September 2020

Introduction: (a letter from the board chair and/or chief executive supporting and introducing the plan)

Context for Planning: (can include a historical synopsis of the organization, internal and external customer feedback results, and a trend analysis of external environmental factors)

Mission, Vision, and core values statement: (express the organization's reason for being, articulate its ideal or preferred future and that of the community it serves, and identify the values that serve as guiding principles for those most closely associated with the organization)

Strategic Goals: (define the outcomes the organization would like to achieve in response to critical issues or fundamental challenges)

Objectives: (state the end results that will support the achievement of the strategic goals. They indicate what the organization is striving for and provide the link between goals and performance measures. Objectives should be measurable (responsibility, timeframe, outcome) and are often distinct)

Strategies: (Some organizations might use strategies instead of objectives in their strategic plans. In this context, strategies define the actions, directions, or means to the end that the organization will pursue to achieve its strategic goals. Strategies indicate how the organization will spend its time and allocate its resources)

Performance Measures: (organizations should have some way to measure performance following the strategic planning process, but the measurement tactics will be unique to each organization)

1

Corona Norco United Way Strategic Plan
September 2020

Corona-Norco United Way

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTINUITY

Goal 1: Business Development				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Update policies and procedure a. (identify policy or procedure) b. (identify policy or procedure) c. (identify policy or procedure)			
Objective 2:	Develop new/missing policies and procedures (new guidelines, diversity, inclusivity, etc.) a. (identify policy or procedure) b. (identify policy or procedure) c. (identify policy or procedure)			
Objective 3:	Develop an emergency plan (pandemic, earthquake, etc.) a. (identify emergency and plan--pandemic) b. (identify emergency and plan—EQ) c. (identify emergency and plan—IT failure)			

Goal 2: Emergency Planning				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	CPR Training for staff			
Objective 2:	Develop an evacuation plan and drill			
Objective 3:	Active shooter training			
Objective 4:	Situational awareness training (DV perpetrators, personal safety)			

Objective 5:	Emergency preparedness supply cache			

Goal 3: Staff Development				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Cross training (DV intake, finances, CYSP, etc.)			
Objective 2:	Training and certifications a. (identify training or certification) b. (identify training or certification) c. (identify training or certification)			
Objective 3:	Mentorship Program			
Objective 4:	Employee retreat			
Objective 5:	Employee health program (mental, emotional, etc.)			

INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Goal 1: Leverage Technology to Enhance Efficiency				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Acquire CRM database			
Objective 2:	Update computers, phones, networks,			
Objective 3:	Acquire mass texting platform			
Objective 4:	Assess software needs			

Goal 2: Develop Digital Footprint				
	Create a social media plan			

Objective 1:				
Objective 2:	Train all staff on social media posting			
Objective 3:	Understand, utilize and leverage analytics			

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1: Board Selection				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Identify the process of selecting board members (who, how, when, etc.)			
Objective 2:	Diversify Board members to reflect the community served			
Objective 3:	Broaden range of Board Member skillset (i.e. DV, Education, etc.)			

Goal 2: Role Clarity				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Update job description			
Objective 2:	Develop clear onboarding process			
Objective 3:	Understand what the CNUW does with a "One Day with United Way" job shadow			

Goal 3: Develop Clear Expectations				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Donation requirement			
Objective 2:	Produce contacts and networking opportunities			
Objective 3:	Be a force multiplier			

Objective 4:	Implement accountability and identify who will be responsible			

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Goal 1: Seek and Leverage Grants

		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Create database of granters			
Objective 2:	Train staff on grant research, writing and administration			

Goal 2: Campaign Development / Plan / Growth

		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Increase workplace giving			
Objective 2:	Seek opportunity with businesses not yet captured			
Objective 3:	Develop campaign calendar			
Objective 4:	Train staff on campaign presentations			
Objective 5:	Create and streamline pledge forms			

Goal 3: Increase Fundraising Revenue and Opportunities

		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Attend community events			
Objective 2:	Develop CNUW Fundraising event			
Objective 3:	Identify new ways to fundraise			
Objective 4:	Follow up with donors			

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Goal 1: Program Development				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	**Update FSS: Transformation & Sustainability** a. Quality vs. Quantity b. Low income housing c. Workforce Development d. Education (GED, College, etc.) e. Client Store			
Objective 2:	**Update CYSP** a. Modernize CWC b. Quality over quantity c. Equipment acquisition d. Develop tutor program e. Create field trips			
Objective 3:	**3a. Develop Volunteer Program** a. Application process b. Background checks c. Waivers (forms) d. Timesheets e. Appreciation ceremony **3b. Corporate volunteer opportunities** a. Seek Corporate philanthropist represented organization b. Develop quality/ fun/ fulfilling projects c. Volunteerism in community events **3c. Explore Staff Volunteer Opportunities in the community**			
Objective 4:	**Develop Internship Program** a. Application process b. Background checks c. Waivers (forms) d. Timesheets e. Appreciation ceremony f. Partnerships with colleges and universities			
Objective 4:	**Youth Board** a. Implement Adulting 101 b. Identify community impact projects			

	c. Capture expenditures for budget process			

Goal 2: Advertising & Marketing				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Update collateral (brochures, handouts, etc.)			
Objective 2:	Update website a. Seek alternate website platform b. Availability in alternate languages			
Objective 3:	Assess need for Swag (shirts, cups, pencils, stickers, etc.)			
Objective 4:	Digital billboards/bus stops			
Objective 5:	Develop a media plan a. Create media contact list (PIO's) b. Create Press Release Template c. Train staff on PR and media d. Dissemination method			

Goal 3: Networking/Partnerships				
		Timeframe	Assigned to	Budget
Objective 1:	Develop a list of agencies who to partnership with (national, state, local) and create contact database			
Objective 2:	Develop a list of businesses (Gyms, grocers, etc. – fundraising, gift cards, times, services)			
Objective 3:	Develop a non-profit resource guide/database			
Objective 4:	Speaking/interview opportunities			
Objective 5:	Partake in community meetings			
Objective 6:	Hold places on boards and committees			

Appendix P – Nvivo Raw Coding Data

Corona Norco United Way - Thematic Coding Using NVivo									
Hierarchical Name	Code Type	Folder Location	Aggregate	List Order	File Type	Count of Name	Number Of Coding References	Sum of Words	Sum of Paragraphs
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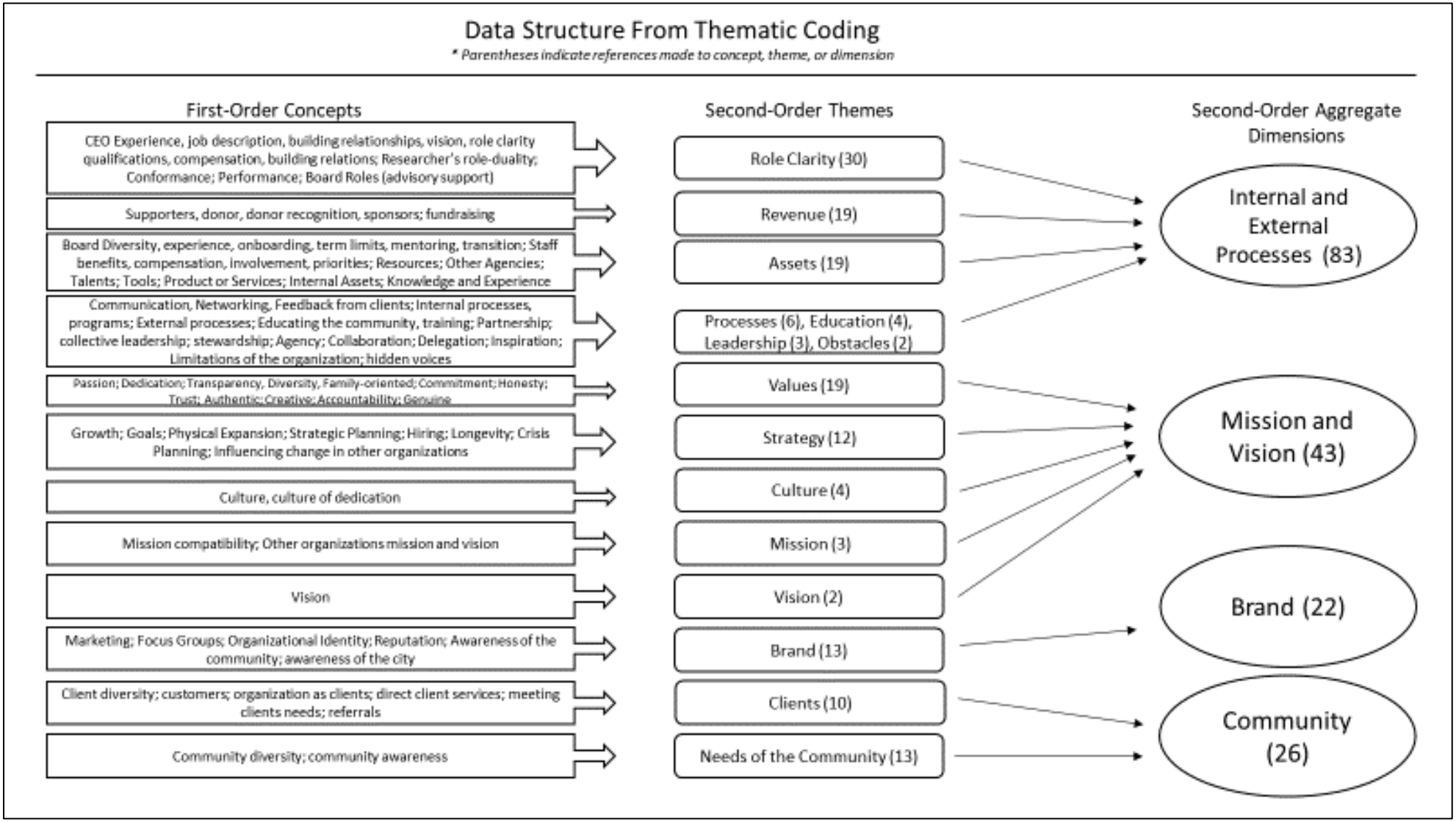
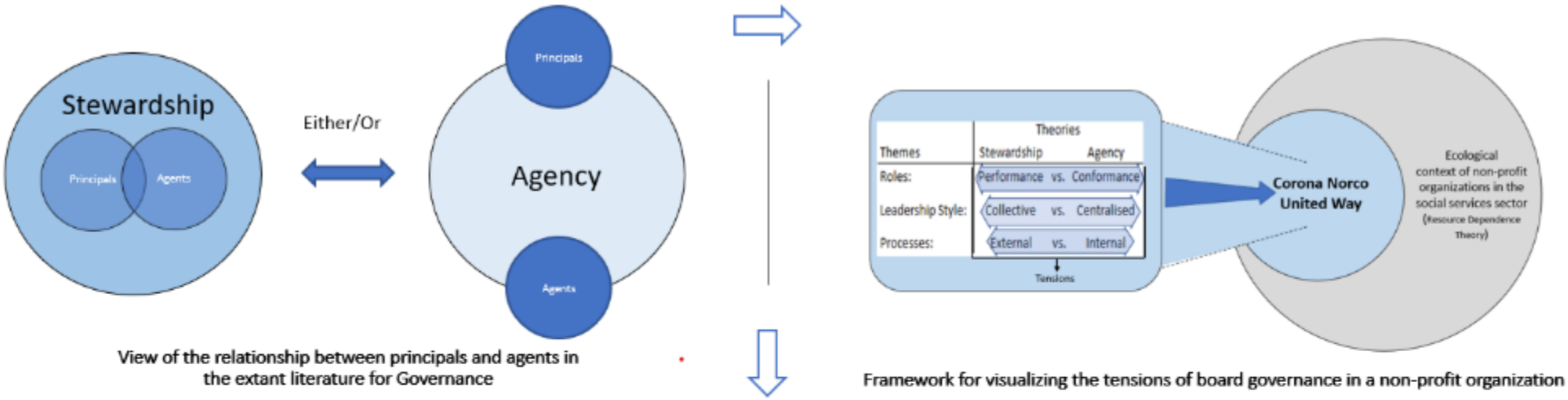
Appendix Q – Data Structure from Thematic Coding

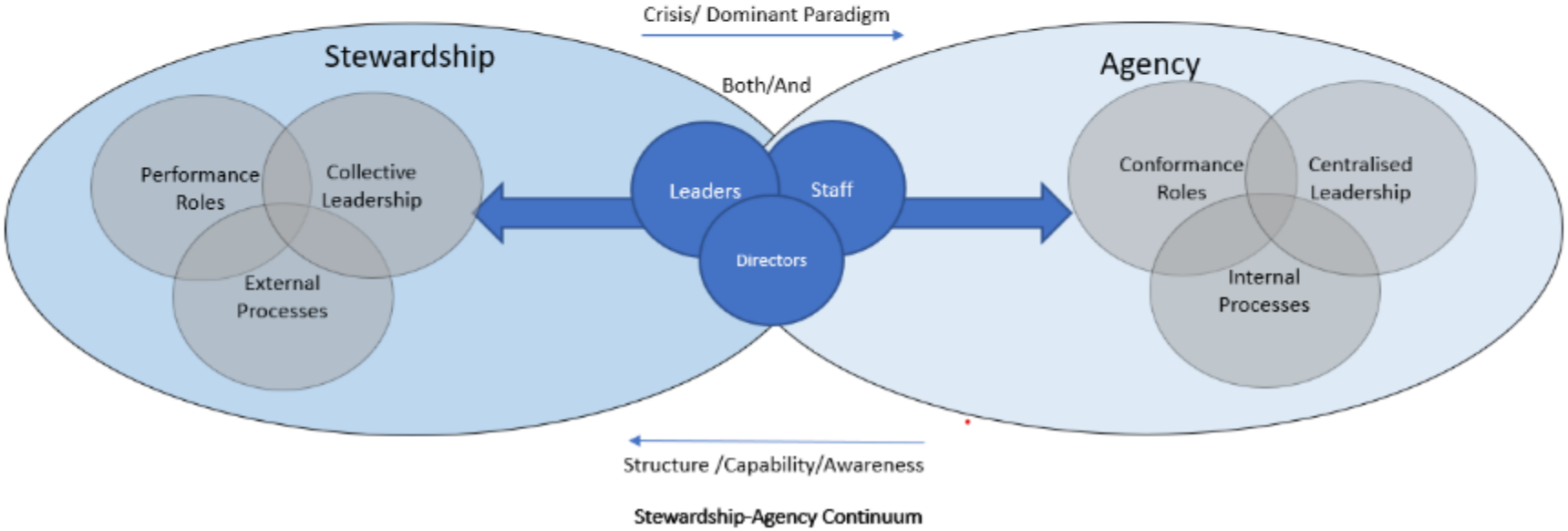


Appendix R – Thematic Model Evolution



View of the relationship between principals and agents in the extant literature for Governance

Framework for visualizing the tensions of board governance in a non-profit organization



Stewardship-Agency Continuum

Appendix S – Final Draft of CNUW 2011-13 Strategic plan

Corona-Norco United Way

Corona-Norco United Way Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023

MISSION STATEMENT

The Corona-Norco United Way engages the community to support and teach individuals toward educational success, and financial stability, healthy living, and independence.

CONTEXT FOR PLANNING

The 2020 – 2023 Strategic Plan is an update to the 2016 Strategic Plan [redacted]. Between 2018 and 2020, Board President Bernie Weis led the discussion of updating the plan through various meetings, workshops, working groups and interviews with the Board of Directors. This work paralleled with Mr. Weis's doctoral thesis from the University of Liverpool entitled *Navigating Nonprofit Board Governance Through Appreciative Inquiry*. This work served a platform for in-depth discussions on the Corona Norco United Way Strategic Plan update and provided the general areas of focus for the plan.

In December 2019, the Board of Directors onboarded a new Chief Executive Officer and tasked her with providing a 90-operational plan. However, in March of 2020 the world, including the United States was faced with the deadly COVID-19 pandemic which forced the Governor to implement quarantine orders for all of California. This required that CNUW close its doors and work remotely for an indefinite amount of time. Through the following 6 months, the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer met over digital platforms to discuss the strategic plan and the best ways to move forward despite the changing societal landscape. During this time, the CNUW staff was invited to provide operational insight to the planning process and goal development which led to a comprehensive framework which was ultimately presented to the Board of Directors on August 13, 2020. At the end of that meeting, the Chief Executive Officer was tasked with updating the framework and developing it into a draft strategic plan for Board review. On September 16, 2020, the Board reviewed the draft, made recommended edits, and was approved at the September 23, 2020 Board Meeting.

The Strategic Plan identifies five areas of focus that need to be addressed over the next three years. With the realities of today's economic climate, it is a possibility that not all goals will be met during this cycle. However, we will strive to accomplish all elements of this plan to ensure the critical needs of the community are met. The focus of the plan is divided up into the following five areas: Business Development, Information Technology Enhancement, Board Governance, Fiscal Sustainability and Community Impact.

Corona-Norco United Way

Corona-Norco United Way
Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	
GOAL 1:	**Ensure Policies and Procedures are Updated**
Objective 1A	*Identify gaps and needs in policies and procedures*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	12 months
Critical Tasks	1.A.1 Perform gap analysis on current policies and procedures 1.A.2 Identify policies and procedures that need to be updated 1.A.3 Implement relevant policies and procedures
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0

GOAL 2:	**Implement Emergency and Disaster Plan**
Objective 2A	*Develop a Business Emergency Plan (BEP)*
Start Date	FY 2021 - 2022
Timeframe	12 months
Critical Tasks	2.A.1 Identify local hazards in the area 2.A.2 Develop lines of succession 2.A.3 Create prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies 2.A.3 Develop cache of emergency supplies
Assigned To	CNUW Staff
Progress Update	Bi-annually
Funding Estimate	TBD
Objective 2B	*Create an emergency and safety training plan for staff*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	12 – 18 months
Critical Tasks	2.B.1 CPR certification 2.B.2 Situational awareness training 2.B.3 Attend active shooter training 2.B.4 Develop evacuation procedures
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer

Progress Update	Bi-annually
Funding Estimate	TBD

GOAL 3:	**Staff Development**
Objective 3A	*Crosstrain staff on all business operations, programs, policies, and procedures.*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	9 – 12 months
Critical Tasks	3.A.1 Certify all staff as Domestic Violence counselors though The Partnership to End Domestic Violence 3.A.2 Develop electronic guidelines for all programs and place them on the shared drive 3.A.3 Identify and train a staff member in CNUW financial processes 3.A.4 Identify necessary trainings and conferences
Assigned To	All staff
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$3,000
Objective 3B	*Develop an employee mental and emotional health wellness program*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	6 – 12 months
Critical Tasks	3.B.1 Identify the mental and emotional health needs of the staff 3.B.2 Ensure a chaplain, Trauma Intervention Program (TIP) or counselor is available for staff needs 3.B.3 Implement regular group check-ins and wellness exercises for staff
Assigned To	All Staff
Progress Update	Bi-annually
Funding Estimate	TBD
Objective 3C	*Create an annual employee retreat for staff to discuss progress of goals/objectives, identify new ideas and strengthen employee morale*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021

Timeframe	18 – 24 months
Critical Tasks	3.C.1 Identify what type and duration of retreat 3.C.2 Determine potential costs 3.C.3 Develop goals and objectives of the retreat
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer
Progress Update	Bi-annually
Funding Estimate	TBD

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENT	
GOAL 4:	**Leverage Technology to Enhance Efficiency**
Objective 4A	*Research and acquire contemporary technology to enhance operational efficiency, time saving, and data accuracy.*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021
Timeframe	6 – 9 months
Critical Tasks	4.A.1 Acquire a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) or Case Management Software 4.A.2 Procure mass texting platform to streamline client communications 4.A.3 Assess and update IT infrastructure including computers, telecommunication systems, networks, printers, software, etc.
Assigned To	Communications & Information Technology Program Manager
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$15,000

GOAL 5:	**Increase Digital Footprint Visibility**
Objective 5A	*Create more visibility on all digital platforms including social media, website, and other interactive platforms*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021
Timeframe	12 – 18 months
Critical Tasks	5.A.1 Create an annual social media plan 5.A.2 Utilize and leverage analytics for tracking and enhancing customer engagement and information dissemination 5.A.3 Train staff on social media posting for all platforms
Assigned To	Communications & Information Technology Program Manager

Progress Update	Bi-annually
Funding Estimate	$0
Objective 5B	*Update website*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021
Timeframe	12 – 18 months
Critical Tasks	5.B.1 Seek alternate website platform that is more cost effective 5.B.2 Pursue platforms to offer alternate language options 5.B.3 Update brochures and informational documents to upload onto the website
Assigned To	Communications & Information Technology Program Manager
Progress Update	Bi-annually
Funding Estimate	$0

BOARD GOVERNANCE	
GOAL 6:	**Modernize Board of Directors Recruitment and Selection Process**
Objective 6A	*Update Board of Director bylaws and ensure there is an accountable process, diversity amongst members, and reflective of the community served*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021 thru FY 2021 - 2022
Timeframe	18 – 24 months
Critical Tasks	6.A.1 Identify the qualities, skillset, and/or representation of a desirable candidate 6.A.2 Identify a clear process of recruiting Board members 6.A.3 Develop a Board reflective of the community served (i.e. geography, demographics, skillset alignment with CNUW mission and programs, connections to various stakeholders, etc.) 6.A.4 Update roles, responsibilities, and description of duties 6.A.5 Identify a clear onboarding process for new members, and place accountability on Board President
Assigned To	Board President and Chief Executive Officer
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0

GOAL 7:	Define Board Participation and Involvement
Objective 7A	*Create expectations for the level of involvement of Board members internal and external to the organization*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	9 - 12 months
Critical Tasks	7.A.1 Provide increased contacts, connections, and networking opportunities to Chief Executive Officer 7.A.2 Identify a minimum donation requirement 7.A.3 Identify level of required participation in CNUW events
Assigned To	Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0

GOAL 8:	Update Mission Statement
Objective 8A	*Review and update the CNUW mission statement*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	3 - 6 months
Critical Tasks	8.A.1 Review the organization's current mission statement and discuss potential updates
Assigned To	Board of Directors and Staff
Progress Update	Monthly
Funding Estimate	$0

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY	
GOAL 9:	**Increase Revenue and Funding Opportunities**
Objective 9A	*Strategize opportunities to increase revenue and fundraising through employee giving campaigns, donations, events, and gifts*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	9.A.1 Secure donation management software 9.A.2 Follow up with donors, sponsors, etc. to strengthen partnerships and relationships 9.A.3 Seek employee giving campaigns with businesses and organizations not yet secured 9.A.4 Broaden relationships with CNUW's entire geographic service area

	9.A.5 Develop an annual CNUW fundraising event 9.A.6 Strengthen partnerships and relationships with current Global Corporate Leaders (GCL's) regional and localized accounts 9.A.7 Ensure staff members are proficient at delivering campaign presentations to various audiences 9.A.8 Identify innovative ways to fundraise
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	TBD

GOAL 10:	**Develop Skilled Grant Writing Workforce**
Objective 10A	*Guide staff in research, writing and administration of grants*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021
Timeframe	18 – 24 months
Critical Tasks	10.A.1 Ensure staff members are knowledgeable in researching grants aligned with the mission and feasibility of the organization 10.A.2 Develop staff's grant writing skills to successfully secure grants for the organization 10.A.3 Educate staff on the processes of grant administration including reporting, procurement, reimbursements, policies/guidelines, federal/state/local regulations, etc. 10.A.4 Create a database of granters
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer
Progress Update	Bi-annually
Funding Estimate	$0

GOAL 11:	**Develop Financial Transparency**
Objective 11A	*Create financial transparency for fiscal years*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	12 months
Critical Tasks	11.A.1 Update the financial account codes to reflect current expenditures 11.A.2 Make all financial documents readily available both electronically and in hard copy 11.A.3 Ensure all financial records are well documented, accounted for and dated 11.A.4 Involve staff in financial decision-making processes and increase financial literacy of the organization

	11.A.5 Organize biennial audits 11.A.6 Update procurement and purchasing guidelines
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer and Board Treasurer
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0

GOAL 12:	**Establish a Reserve Fund**
Objective 12A	*Generate enough revenue to start building a reserve account*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021 and FY 2021 – 2022
Timeframe	18 – 24 months
Critical Tasks	12.A.1 Maintain a balanced budget per Fiscal Year by adjusting revenue and expenditures as needed 12.A.2 Begin incrementally placing funds, as available, in a designated bank account assigned for the purposes of building a reserve 12.A.3 Develop annual goals for reserve fund
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer and Board Treasurer
Progress Update	Bi-annually
Funding Estimate	$0

COMMUNITY IMPACT	
GOAL 13:	**Update the Family Support Services (FSS), Paths to Success (PTS)and subordinate programs to focus on "quality over quantity" services offered to the community**
Objective 13A	*Identify specific updates to program services through collaborative workshops and discussions*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021
Timeframe	12 months
Critical Tasks	13.A.1 Conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of each program including Domestic Violence (DV), Children Wellness Program (CWP), Children & Youth Success Program (CYSP) 13.A.2 Discuss methods to modernize services to accommodate the new societal landscape such as (workforce development, low income housing opportunities, rapid rehousing, homeless solutions, etc.) 13.A.3 Redirect focus of clients from solely counseling and advocacy to transformation and sustainability

Assigned To	All staff
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	TBD

GOAL 14:	**Develop and Implement a Domestic Violence Prevention Program**
Objective 14A	*Create a Domestic Violence Prevention Program focused on teaching safe and healthy relationship skills to teens and young adults*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	9 months
Critical Tasks	14.A.1 Determine timelines, deadlines, and goals for program implementation 14.A.2 Identify key stakeholders 14.A.3 Attend required training and sessions though The California Partnership to End Domestic Violence, Cal OES or California Department of Public Health 14.A.4 Customize prevention materials/curriculum to meet the needs of the local sociocultural environment 14.A.5 Implement prevention strategies in service area
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer and Administrative/FSS Program Manager
Performance Measure	Monthly
Funding Estimate	$150,000—funding secured through the Cal OES Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Program Grant

GOAL 15:	**Build a Robust Volunteer/Internship Program**
Objective 15A	*Update, improve and enhance the current CNUW volunteer program to a robust and comprehensive program*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	9 – 12 months
Critical Tasks	15.A.1 Review and update the volunteer application and supporting documentation (i.e. volunteer job descriptions, expectations, waivers, code of conduct, etc.) and reflect internship opportunities 15.A.2 Research and secure a system for conducting background checks for volunteers/interns 18 and over 15.A.3 Develop a mechanism for tracking volunteer hours 15.A.4 Build a volunteer/intern Appreciation Ceremony 15.A.5 Develop partnerships with academic institutions and key community stakeholders for collaborative internship programs

Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer, Paths to Success Program Manager, Communications, and IT Program Manager
Progress Update	Monthly
Funding Estimate	$2,000
Objective 15B	*Create Corporate Volunteer Opportunities*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	15.B.1 Identify corporate philanthropist represented organizations in service area 15.B.2 Develop quality, fun-filled, and fulfilling volunteer opportunities 15.B.3 Ascertain critical deadlines corporations must adhere to when planning opportunities
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	TBD
Objective 15C	*Explore Volunteer Opportunities for CNUW Staff*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	15.C.1 Identify volunteer opportunities for staff to better support the community 15.C.2 Determine the frequency of time spent volunteering
Assigned To	All staff
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0

GOAL 16:	**Develop a Media Plan**
Objective 16A	*Create a media plan for telling the CNUW story and sharing with the community the resources available*
Start Date	FY 2021 - 2022
Timeframe	12 – 18 months
Critical Tasks	16.A.1 Create a media/public information officer (PIO) contact list of key stakeholders and media outlets 16.A.2 Draft a press release template 16.A.3 Train Communications and IT Program Manager on the public relations and media realm 16.A.4 Develop dissemination triggers and methods 16.A.5 Establish positive relationship with key PIO's

Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer and Communications and IT Program Manager
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0

GOAL 17:	**Increase Community Presence and Awareness**
Objective 17A	*Develop critical tasks and identify opportunities that will enhance CNUW's presence in the community*
Start Date	FY 2020 - 2021
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	17.A.1 Create a list of national, state, and local agencies whom CNUW can collaborate and partner with 17.A.2 Develop a non-profit resource guide/database for internal use 17.A.3 Seek opportunities for presenting, speaking or interviews 17.A.4 Partake in community meetings consistently 17.A.5 Hold positions on boards, committees, and work groups 17.A.6 Foster collaborative relationships with community stakeholders to meet the needs of the community
Assigned To	Chief Executive Officer
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0

GOAL 18:	**Youth Board Growth**
Objective 18A	*Identify areas that the Youth Board can grow and develop their programs*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021
Timeframe	12 months
Critical Tasks	18.A.1 Mitigate gaps in communication and transparency between the Youth Board and Youth Board Executive Team 18.A.2 Improve the distribution of labor amongst members for a more equitable and fair approach 18.A.3 Discuss and differentiate the roles and responsibilities for each Board position 18.A.4 Develop method to grow leadership skills for all members
Assigned To	Youth Board Program Director
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0

Objective 18B	*Create a Youth Board Middle School Mentorship Program*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021
Timeframe	12 – 18 months
Critical Tasks	18.B.1 Develop goals and objectives for a Youth Board Middle School Mentorship Program 18.B.2 Identify point of contact at each Middle School and establish relationship 18.B.3 Identify and funding needs to implementing the program and potential ongoing costs
Assigned To	Youth Board Program Director and Youth Board
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0
Objective 18C	*Expand and Grow Current Programs*
Start Date	FY 2020 – 2021
Timeframe	12 – 18 months
Critical Tasks	18.C.1 Develop partnerships with community stakeholders to identify community impact projects 18.C.2 Expand Adulting 101 to High School students beyond the CNUW Youth Board
Assigned To	Youth Board Program Director and Youth Board
Progress Update	Quarterly
Funding Estimate	$0

Corona-Norco United Way

Corona-Norco United Way
Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023

Acronym Glossary	
Cal OES	California Office of Emergency Services
CDPH	California Department of Public Health
CNUW	Corona Norco United Way
CPTEDV	California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
CWP	Children Wellness Program
CYSP	Children & Youth Success Program
DV	Domestic Violence
FSS	Family Support Services
GED	General Education Development
Hi-Set	High School Equivalency Test
HWC	Homework Club
PTS	Paths to Success
YB	Youth Board