



CONVERSATION STARTERS

Who Owns the Monkey?

FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVES

1. How can you serve as “First Assistant To” your staff, supporting them through successes and failures?
2. How does your organizational structure enable decentralized decision-making and empower staff to make and take responsibility for their decisions?

FOR STAFF TEAM MEMBERS

1. Think of an instance where you dropped the monkey and your manager had to step in. What would you do differently next time?
2. In what ways do you see your chief executive and colleagues taking responsibility for their decisions? What can you learn from their examples?

FOR BOARD MEMBERS

1. What monkeys do you have responsibility for, separate from management’s? What leadership skills are required to effectively own those monkeys?
2. How does the board communicate its accountability to stakeholders and the public?

FOR INDIVIDUAL DONORS

1. In what ways can a nonprofit best demonstrate to you its accountability and transparency?
2. What does it take for a nonprofit to earn and maintain your trust and support?

FOR INSTITUTIONAL PHILANTHROPIES

1. How do your grantees demonstrate a culture of accountability and transparency? What would you do if you lose trust in a grantee?
2. Are your grant reporting requirements creating unnecessary work and taking time away from your grantees’ focus on mission delivery? What could you do to simplify your requirements to be mutually beneficial to your institution and your grantees?