****

**Lead Partner Tips and Lessons Learned**

1. **Believe strongly in both SVP and in the Investee’s mission.** Genuine passion for the Investee’s mission is important. If you don’t have it, don’t take the job. Explore the Investee organization before accepting LP role.
2. **Relationship and trust-building comes first and takes time; good work will follow.** Taking time to build trust in the beginning of the relationship will pay off long term. In some cases, achieving and celebrating small successes early on can help build trust and confidence.
3. **Listen and Ask** the Investee what they need from SVP and respond accordingly. You are their central point of contact with SVP. Walk the “middle ground” and serve as a genuine advocate for the Investee.
4. **Communicate with the Investee group “as needed.”** When demands for SVP’s services are great, be there. Otherwise give them space.
5. **Don’t commit the resources of SVP unless you know they are readily available.** Before committing, check with SVP Executive Director on Partner availability and skills needed.
6. **Demonstrate flexibility.** Circumstances and priorities may change for the Investee; help them as they believe they need help. After all, it is their business.
7. **“Simple is better, more is a chore.”** – Minimize paperwork and ongoing reporting.
8. **Recognize the differences that exist between the for-profit and nonprofit worlds.** Respect the organization’s values, culture and priorities which may be different from your own. Be sensitive to expecting too much too quickly.
9. **Utilize your support network.** Read case studies and work plans from prior Investees. Talk with other LPs, ask them what worked, and what didn’t. If you are stuck, reach out and ask for advice. The Executive Director can connect you with partners who have experienced similar situations.

**AND MOST IMPORTANTLY…**

1. **Have patience. Change takes time.** Realize that the initial forecasted outcomes might take longer than originally expected. Many times SVP supports the development of new processes or systems, but it takes time for those to be fully integrated into their culture, and sometimes years after the new systems are operational.