



# The State Bar of California

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## **OPEN SESSION**

### **AGENDA ITEM**

#### **BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE III.A**

**DATE:** July 21, 2022

**TO:** Members, Board Executive Committee

**FROM:** Leah Wilson, Executive Director  
Steve Mazer, Chief Administrative Officer

**SUBJECT:** Executive Director Performance Evaluation

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Board Executive Committee is responsible for conducting an annual performance evaluation of the executive director. This agenda item outlines the process for completing the executive director's performance evaluation for the one-year period ending July 12, 2022.

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#### **BACKGROUND**

The Board of Trustees Policy Manual, Section 7.1, states: An annual and confidential 360-degree performance evaluation of the executive director will be conducted by the Board Executive Committee and presented to the Board for review and approval not more than 90 days after the anniversary date of the executive director's appointment. The Board Executive Committee's evaluation will be based on a performance plan for the executive director developed in conjunction with the Office of Human Resources and provided to the executive director not more than 90 days after appointment. The Board and the Board Executive Committee may meet in closed session to discuss the annual performance evaluation of the executive director.

#### **DISCUSSION**

The Board of Trustees last conducted a performance evaluation of the regularly appointed (i.e., not interim) executive director in 2019. The basic structure, which included a 360-degree evaluation with questions addressing both performance objectives and leadership competencies, is still relevant and appropriate for the current review cycle.

The 360-degree evaluation survey will be developed and administered by an independent organizational consultant with expertise in these matters. The survey will be sent to the Board of Trustees; members of the State Bar leadership team; other State Bar staff; and key external stakeholders.

While the executive director does not currently have a formal performance plan in place, Board feedback provided to the executive director over the course of the last twelve months was used to establish draft performance evaluation questions, broadly categorized as follows and provided in full in Attachment A:

**Performance Objectives**

- Completion of 2017–2022 Strategic Plan Objectives
- Development of 2022–2027 Strategic Plan
- Other Board Identified Executive Director Priorities

**Leadership Competencies**

- Professionalism & Integrity
- Interpersonal Skills
- Vision, Strategy, and Innovation
- Managing Change
- Leadership & Management

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) will serve as lead staff support to the Board Executive Committee for the 2022 executive director performance evaluation process. The CAO will work with the committee chair and vice-chair or designees, and with the consultant, to finalize the evaluation survey, and will coordinate with the consultant for the administration of the survey and presentation of results to the Board Executive Committee. The survey will be conducted in August, so that the Board Executive Committee can discuss the results and prepare the performance evaluation for presentation to the full Board at its September meeting.

**FISCAL/PERSONNEL IMPACT**

Conducting the 360-degree survey will cost approximately \$3,600. Funds for this cost are included in the 2022 budget for the Office of Human Resources.

**AMENDMENTS TO RULES**

None

**AMENDMENTS TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY MANUAL**

None

## **STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS**

Updates are being made to this section of the agenda item template to reflect the 2022–2027 Strategic Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

None

## **ATTACHMENT LIST**

- A.** Draft Executive Director 360 Degree Survey Questions

**State Bar of California  
Executive Director 360 Degree Survey Questions  
Performance Objectives and Leadership Competencies  
Draft July 2022**

**PART 1: 2021–2022 PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES**

For each performance objective statement, respondents will be asked: *How strongly do you agree that Leah Wilson has performed this action well?* Responses will be on a six-point scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

**Completion of 2017–2022 Strategic Plan Objectives**

[The questions below are related to the entire 2017–2022 strategic plan. They will be edited to include only those parts of the plan that were still in progress in 2021–2022.]

**Transform the State Bar into a purely Regulatory Agency**

1. Effectively separated the State Bar Sections into a new nonprofit entity (the California Lawyers Association).
2. Implemented reforms to the State Bar’s volunteer committee/commission structure.

**Well-functioning and appropriately resourced licensing and discipline System**

3. Redistributed internal resources (e.g., funds, personnel, facilities) to support the Office of Chief Trial Counsel.
4. Developed a quantitative framework for determining the future level of licensing fees necessary to adequately fund the discipline system.
5. Implemented improvements to technology and/or business processes to make the State Bar’s licensing and discipline functions more efficient.

**Excellence in infrastructure and management**

6. Identified opportunities to increase revenue and/or reduce costs.
7. Established a succession plan for key positions throughout the State Bar.
8. Made investments in other technologies (separate from the discipline system) enabling employees to work more efficiently.
9. Remedied instances of noncompliance with statutory requirements or other rules (e.g., licensee fingerprinting).
10. Developed mechanisms to ensure future compliance with statutory requirements and other rules.

**Meaningful and effective Access to Justice and Diversity initiatives**

11. Initiated one or more Access to Justice Initiatives.
12. Initiated one or more Diversity Initiatives.
13. Demonstrated a commitment to measuring the effectiveness of the identified initiatives.

Favorable public narrative and positive relationships with key stakeholders

14. Established or maintained productive relationships with key legislative stakeholders.
15. Established or maintained productive relationships with key Supreme Court stakeholders.

Shared Leadership

16. Implemented an improved, sustainable management structure to make the Executive Leadership Team more effective.
17. Implemented an improved, sustainable model for an effective executive director/chair relationship.

Informed and engaged Board of Trustees

18. Implemented an improved, sustainable model for Board communication and dialogue.
19. Implemented a more planned and strategic approach to Board meetings.

Informed and engaged employees

20. Communicated more frequently with State Bar employees to keep them better informed.
21. Created increased opportunities for professional development and career advancement for staff.
22. Increased the focus on holding staff at all levels more accountable for performance and conduct standards.
23. Through ongoing training and coaching, enhanced the skills of front-line supervisors and mid-level managers.

**Development of 2022–2027 Strategic Plan**

24. Facilitated an effective process for the Board to identify priorities and goals for the 2022–2027 period.
25. Provided avenues for State Bar staff to meaningfully participate in the 2022–2027 strategic planning process.

**Other Board-Identified Executive Director Priorities**

26. Built and maintained productive relationship with legislative stakeholders.
27. Facilitated effective Board oversight of the chief trial counsel.
28. Established relationships with new partners to support mission impact.

## **PART 2: LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES**

For each competency statement, respondents will be asked: *How strongly do you agree that Leah Wilson has performed/performs this action well?* Responses will be on a six-point scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Professionalism & Integrity

1. Has earned credibility as a respected leader of the State Bar.

2. Is trustworthy (e.g., keeps her word, does what she says she will do; keeps confidences where appropriate).
3. Acts professionally (e.g., treats others respectfully, adheres to and promotes high standards of ethical conduct).
4. Sets a good example for others to follow.

#### Interpersonal Skills

5. Listens to/considers the opinions of others.
6. Communicates effectively in difficult situations (e.g., remains composed, de-escalates highly emotional situations/people, is clear about what she can/will do)
7. Responds effectively to people with varying needs or in different situations.
8. Is a good mediator of conflicts/differences between and among individuals and/or groups.

#### Vision, Strategy, and Innovation

9. Communicates the State Bar's long-term goals/priorities to others (e.g., employees, the Board, stakeholders).
10. Communicates a vision for the State Bar that sparks excitement in others.
11. Encourages people (e.g., the Board, managers, employees) to find improved or innovative ways of doing their work.
12. Develops effective strategies to achieve long-term goals or address operational needs, including finding innovative ways to secure needed resources.

#### Managing Change

13. Implements changes/improvements based on operational needs, technological advances, evolving conditions and/or external forces.
14. When making decisions, evaluates the impact on all parts of the organization.
15. Solicits feedback from those impacted by potential changes.
16. Keeps people (e.g., employees, Board, stakeholders) informed during the process of change.

#### Leadership & Management

17. Helps employees understand the significance of their work and their role in meeting the State Bar's overall mission.
18. Coaches and develops managers/employees to higher performance.
19. Delegates decision making/problem solving authority to the right person or group.
20. Exhibits trust in others to fulfill their responsibilities.
21. Holds herself accountable for achieving goals/desired results.
22. Holds others accountable for achieving goals/desired results.
23. Inspires individuals, teams, and offices to exceed expectations/excel.

### **PART 3: OPEN-ENDED/NARRATIVE QUESTIONS**

1. What are Leah Wilson's greatest strengths? (list up to 3)
2. What were Leah Wilson's greatest accomplishments in 2021–2022? (list top 2)
3. What suggestions do you have to help Leah Wilson enhance her effectiveness? (list up to 3)
4. Additional comments?