Basic principles of effective organizations

The most effective organization:

1. Maintains the 4 key relationships [See Joyaux book – Strategic Fund Development: Building Profitable Relationships That Last]
    Internal relationship: holistic infrastructure that produces health organization
    Relationship with community: process of strategic planning to ensure relevance to the community
    Relationship with constituents: process of developing and strengthening connections with individuals and groups so that when you ask, they are ready to respond.
    Relationship with volunteers: capacity to enable volunteers to take meaningful action on your behalf.

2. Clearly articulates its mission and values and regularly monitors adherence.

3. Understands that nonprofit organizations must hold two missions dear: the programmatic mission (e.g., improving public education or saving the rainforest) and the mission of philanthropy (voluntary action for the common good).

4. Adheres to the highest ethical standards.

5. Understands its community and focuses on community needs.

6. Works hard to develop its constituencies, understanding their interests and motivations, and fosters two-way communications with its constituencies.

7. Works well with other organizations.

8. Designs and carries out high quality programs and activities.

9. Develops the necessary infrastructure (e.g., systems, policies, plans, marketing, fund development, etc.) to support the mission.

10. Understands differences and similarities between governance and management and develops them both.

11. Focuses on results as well as process – why we do what we do and what the results are rather than what we do and how we do it. Regularly sets goals, monitors performance and intervenes as necessary.

12. Maintains diversified revenue streams from various sources, including a comprehensive integrated philanthropic fund development program that reflects best practice and the body of knowledge.

13. Continually assesses and enhances its own capacity to do the work, improves current competencies and develops new ones, and holds itself accountable for optimum performance.

14. Continually acquires knowledge, learns and changes in a timely and well-managed manner.

15. Offers challenging and rewarding opportunities for staff and volunteers, encourages teamwork and supports learning.

16. Balances continuity and tradition with new ideas and innovation.

It's a slow process of building and nurturing. Building an effective organization isn't a linear process either. You bounce around, addressing different areas of capacity at different times.