



## Remodeling – a time for renewal

Have you ever come to a place where you realized that you just had to make changes? That your current home, office, lifestyle, job or whatever no longer fit? As the founder of CenterPoint Institute, I reached that point early in 2008 and started a life-remodeling project – a journey that took more twists and turns than I could have imagined but one that took me to where I needed to be.

Like individuals, nonprofit organizations need to undertake remodeling projects from time to time. Regardless of how long an organization has been in existence, there are signs that it's time for remodeling; here are a few:

- No one can even come close to reciting the [mission statement](#).
- Board members are selected by the “who-knows-whom” method and some have served so long they have their own chair at the board table.
- No one knows where the previous strategic plan is or what it said.
- [Board self-assessment](#) is un-heard of – in fact, it would be threatening to even suggest it.
- [Evaluation, measurement, and assessment](#) are haphazard activities only done to satisfy funders, not to make real decisions.

Opportunities for remodeling can include:

- The year before a new board president takes office -- a great time for [strategic planning](#).
- Facility over-crowding; loss of lease; or other property-related issues.
- Too many organizations in the service area competing for funds, volunteers, and public awareness -- how about mergers or collaborations?
- Retirement or resignation of an executive director.

Some of the lessons I learned from my own remodeling experience might be useful for organizational remodeling projects:

- Make space in the organization's life for doing what it will take.
- Consider [hiring a coach](#). I did and she kept me on track and thinking about options.
- Have a vision of what you want things to look like or be like when the project is finished but be willing to modify your plan – things change.
- Learn! Read! Ask questions! The knowledge you gain will serve you for years to come.

**Recommended Reading:** The Not So Big Life: Making Room for What Really Matters, Sarah Susanka. Susanka is an architect who applies design principles to how we design our lives. The Amazon book description offers this synopsis: “Through simple exercises and inspiring stories, Susanka reveals that all we need to do is make small shifts in our day – subtle movements that open our minds as if we were opening windows to let in fresh air. The result: we quickly discover that we have all the space and time we need for the things in our lives that really matter. These small changes can yield great rewards. In her elegant, clear style, Susanka convinces us that less is truly more – much more.”

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