In a group of 4 or less...

- Names, pronouns
- Role in your organization
- What power does this role give you to make change?
- What responsibilities does that give you to create a good working environment and good outcomes for your community?
Directors / C-level

Program Managers

Direct Service Staff

most resources

furthest from the need

fewest resources

closest to the need

furthest from the need

most resources

furthest from the need

fewest resources

closest to the need

furthest from the need

most resources

furthest from the need

fewest resources

closest to the need

furthest from the need

most resources

furthest from the need

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closest to the need

furthest from the need

most resources

furthest from the need

fewest resources

closest to the need

furthest from the need

most resources

furthest from the need

fewest resources

closest to the need
Directors / C-level
- Make policy and budgeting decisions
- Control the official messaging to staff and constituents
- Fire people

Program Managers
- Communicate with both the top and direct service staff and control the flow of information
- Decide how decisions from top are operationalized

Direct Service Staff
- Silently or vocally refuse to follow policy
- Decide how work is actually done
- Control the actual messaging to constituents
most resources

furthest from
the need

fewest
resources

closest to
the need

CEO &
Development
Department

Operations
(inc IT)

Programs
furthest from the need

fewest resources

most resources

closest to the need

Funders

Capacity Builders

Direct Service Orgs
In your group...

• Where in this hierarchy does your organization live?
• What is your power or influence in the power structure
• What responsibility does your organization hold in that relationship to push for good working conditions and positive community impact.
Directors / C-level
Program Managers
Direct Service Staff

most resources | closest to the need
fewest resources | furthest from the need
In your group...

• What ways of making change are uniquely available or unavailable to you because of your seniority, personality, age, race, class, gender, ability, sexual orientation, etc

• What responsibility does that give you to create a healthy working environment and positive community outcomes
My Takeaways

• Hierarchies are here to stay in the nonprofit world. Let’s acknowledge that reality, grow their strengths, and address their weaknesses.

• All parts of the hierarchy have power and responsibility, but difference places in that structure have different methods of change available.

• We must consider not only where we are in the hierarchy but also where our department and organization is.

• Our personal experiences of race, class, gender, ability, etc impact what places in the hierarchy are available to us and can build or suppress our power within those positions. We may have varying responsibilities as a result.