

The Development Plan Matrix



Successful fundraising campaigns are built on four important elements

1. Clearly articulated mission, vision and result measures for what is achieved.
2. Marketing – Recognized brand, clear messaging and consistent visibility
3. Organizational Infrastructure with board, leadership, staffing, and systems to support fundraising strategies.
4. Full development workplan for 12 to 24 months.

I. Strategic Plan – Mission, Vision and Result Measures

The strategic plan provides the foundation for a development program – it is the platform for fundraising and provides the rationale for why you are asking for support.

Key to the strategic plan:

- Clearly articulated mission - one simple, straightforward and compelling sentence
- Vision statement – one to three paragraphs describing the organization and its impact on the target population and the community.
- Result Measures – three key performance or result measures accomplished by the organization – must be measurable with timeline (not an output measure but result measures). Use key words that resonate with public and coincide with messaging.
- Strategies on how you will accomplish the result measures.

Major donors, foundations and corporations will ask to see the strategic plan. It provides them information on your roadmap for the future, your priorities and the action that will sustain the organization over the next three to five years. The fundraising plans and goals arise out of the priorities in the planning document. Currently, plans with clearly articulated result measures and milestones are more successful in obtaining community support.

Key questions during the strategic planning process (environmental scan) are:

- what is the perception of the organization in the community,
- what type of name recognition does the organization have,
- how will fundraising fit within other organizational plans, and
- how is the organization viewed among key stakeholder groups

During these times, organizations must have a financial plan that demonstrates the sustainability of its programs over the next three years. Funding projections must provide realistic information about how the organization is planning to build and maintain the funding to sustain the programs.

Discussion: What is the progress of the strategic plan? Is the mission and vision clear for the organization? What are your three result measures? Is there a viable financial plan? Is there a one page summary of the strategic plan? Does the plan provide a framework for fundraising?

II. Organizational Infrastructure

Management and Fundraising

The leadership of the organization needs to become actively involved and engaged in fundraising. Relationships have to be established over time to acquire major donors, larger grants from foundations and government funding. Management will have to assume that fundraising and development is a top priority for the next three years and establishes a workplan aimed at four levels of funding:

- Foundation and larger corporate donors
- Major donors- individuals that are potential contributors
- Government funding – lobbying, public policy participation and leadership
- Individual donors – participate in the campaign and provide leadership as needed

In order to do this, the organization appears to need to develop some additional management infrastructure to support the time commitment required for this type of focus. The current job description and perceptions of the role of the executive team may also need to adapt and change to a new set of expectations around fundraising.

Foundations and major donors are usually perceived as investing in the mission and the leadership of the organization. They trust that the leadership will implement the grant as designed. In order to obtain “investments” the organization will need management out front and building relationships to obtain this trust.

Participation in public policy is another activity that will need time and commitment. A public policy plan that includes lobbying, educating, visibility and participation should be developed with the goal of obtaining significant levels of funding from the state and the county. This plan will require both board and management participation in key events. Retaining a lobbyist should be included as part of the strategy. There is a misconception that nonprofits cannot lobby – the law is clear that they can, they must register and limit the lobbying to an insignificant part of their budget. They also cannot endorse individual candidates for office.

Discussion: Role of management – organizational structure to support leadership of development? How to develop annual workplan? What are the key targets for relationships over the next two years? What is the view on lobbying? What research is needed to better understand impact of these activities?

Governance- The Board of Directors

Board Giving

Fundraising now requires that the board fully participate financially by donating to the organization. The goal is 100% board participation before you begin the public process of requesting funds. It is a strong statement to the entire community that the board is completely committed to the organization. Foundations, corporations, major donors and individuals expect to see strong board participation before they give their own support.

Board giving can be somewhat difficult to institute with existing board members if this was not a clear expectation during recruitment and orientation.

An example of a guideline for board expectations and giving is the following: *Board members serve as both donors and fundraisers. It is expected that there will be 100% participation in the annual fund and in fundraising events. Board members are expected to set a leadership example with their support as well as make The organization a top priority for their personal giving, and where applicable, corporate giving.*

Discussion: What is the Board's philosophy around giving as well as board members seeking support from others? Is there strong board agreement around giving personally and securing support from others? Are the expectations around fundraising clearly articulated during the recruitment process?

Future Board Recruitment and Nominations

Given that fundraising has become a top priority for any organization, two key areas to address in future recruitment of new board members are:

- When considering candidates, do you discuss if the candidates for the board have the following resources: money to donate, access to money, access to other resources (foundations, etc.) and availability for active participation in solicitation visits, hosting events, and making introductions.)
- When considering candidates, do you track their community connections in the areas of government, corporate, media, political, philanthropic, social services, and small businesses? If they have connections, are they willing to open doors for The organization?

Key to board recruitment now is to be very intentional in trying to secure the leaders that you would like on the board in two or three years. Start now to groom future leaders on the board. This activity will add value over the long term. As a newer organization, board recruitment would take on a stronger role within the organization an eye to supporting fundraising.

Internal Systems and Staffing

Moving from fundraising mentality to development requires initial upfront investment from the organization. The key is to balance the upfront investment with the potential return and to be realistic about what is needed. Key elements include the following:

- Development software to support donor lists, mailings, prospecting, etc. There are many affordable packages that will provide strong support for staff and save time over the long term.
- Financial reporting – financial statements have to be program based and organized for public distribution if needed. Donors have to be able to track where they money is going.
- Staffing – dedicated staff may be needed if the development function is to grow – this will depend on the fundraising targets.
 - Grant writers – contract consultants for government and foundation proposals
 - Annual campaign consultants – variety of tasks depending on your development resources.
 - Data entry and recording
 - Major gift campaign consultants
 - Capital campaign consultants
- Database software to track result measures
- Web programmer to regularly update site
- Management team restructure to support fund raising time by executive and key staff

III. Development Plan

Fundraising is asking people for money – development is building a process into a program that involves planning, prospecting, cultivating prospects/current donors, soliciting prospects/current donors, and stewarding donors. A written annual development plan is important. The plan contains a summary of the fundraising goals and objectives and the activities to achieve them within a defined timeframe. The plan would include your case for support and outline giving priorities. It would include a discussion on the

strategies and actions for prospecting, cultivating, soliciting and stewarding donors.

The case for support provides the compelling reasons for a donor to support The organization, right now. It is to be urgent and strong. Key components of the case include the emotional case, the rational case, the institutional case and the financial case. The case will form the talking points for proposals, discussions with prospects, solicitation letters, phone calls, direct mail, etc.

Development is truly about developing long term relationships and promoting the mission of the organization.

Key questions to ask:

- How much can you invest to expand your development program given that development costs are expensive and money is tight in the organization? What strategies will give you the most return on your investment and where do you best focus your efforts?
- Where are your best prospects for giving? How engaged are past board members and former donors? What has been your donor retention rate? What are your current relationships with foundation staff? Who can develop the prospect list with you? Who are your natural partners?
- What is the balance of government, foundation and corporate and individual donor fundraising? Where is the best return for the effort? What is short term – immediate and what is longer term? How do you balance the investments?
- How are relationships being cultivated now? How many appointments are made each week to talk with funders and ask for supporter? What is the plan to build relationships and how does this get implemented?
- What is the infrastructure for processing donations, keeping lists, reporting, and being accountable to funders?
- What is the annual campaign now? How often do you ask current donors to increase their gifts? Do you have special appeals? How are you reaching out to expand your lists?
- What role do fundraising events have in your plan?

Discussion: What are the annual targets for each type of funding? Is there a three year development plan? Are there strategies in place for each type of funding category? (government, foundation, corporate, major donor, individual donors, etc.) What is happening this year and what should happen in 2010 and 2011?

IV. Branding, Messaging and Marketing

Successful development has to include consistent marketing, public relations, and messaging. The organization may need to raise its profile, increase awareness and visibility in key communities and the larger community. It must have strong name recognition as a key nonprofit organization serving an important need.

In corporate terms, organizations need to develop a brand and consistently message it to key constituency groups and to the greater community. An annual public relations plan that supports and enhances development should be developed and implemented. This can be done internally, with board and committee assistance and/or with professional consulting assistance.

The marketing plan should include the following elements:

- Key media stories timed to coincide with development activities
 - TV interviews, morning talk shows, media interview, meeting with newspaper editorial board, local neighborhood papers, other press, key church bulletins, etc.
 - Press should be timed to key development activities
- Communications activities to past board members, past funders, key legislators and policy makers, and other past relationships – needed on ongoing basis.
- Monthly schedule of key meetings with potential funders, key leaders in business and community, key legislators, United Way board members, etc.
 - Strategies to ensure relationships are developed and maintained – that conversations take place, strengthen relationships and keep moving forward
 - Communication activities that support meetings and build successful long term relationships
- Fundraising events – schedule and purpose
- Visibility events – schedule and tied to donor campaigns
- Web and online marketing – what tools make the most sense for your donors?
- Branding concepts and themes, consistent materials and look/feel in all of public information.

Discussion: If we laid out all of your promotional materials, a copy of your home page on the web site, and your fundraising materials, would there be a consistent brand. What is your tag line? Do you have a public relations plan for the next 12 months?