



May 2002 Membership Meeting Building Capacities

Nuts & Bolts of Fundraising: Summary Notes

Facilitators: Nancy Eaton (Pennsylvania State) and Shirley Baker (Washington in St. Louis)

More than 40 people packed the room to discuss the fundraising role and responsibilities of the library director/dean. The meeting was focused on practical issues facing directors relatively new to fundraising. Nancy Eaton and Shirley Baker gave brief introductions and then opened the session to questions and discussion.

The meeting began with a consideration of how the library fits into the fundraising plan of the institution. Shirley Baker said it is important for the director to determine whether the human resources are there or not. She pointed out that the director should not wait but take immediate steps to position the library within the institutional fundraising structure.

Nancy Eaton identified three different organizational models for development:

- Centralized institutional model--the least efficient for the library.
- Decentralized "on your own" model in which the director needs to hire and staff the fundraising unit for the library.
- Centralized/decentralized model in which fundraising is paid for by a central authority but works within individual departments. This model, which is Nancy's favorite, can be very effective for the library.

Many participants indicated that they had university development staff that resided in the library but that they, as directors, needed to assume overall responsibility. Some directors noted the difficulty of convincing library staff to make presentations to donors and be otherwise involved in the fundraising process.

It was mentioned that there is sometimes a cultural difference between the central development staff that considers only cash contributions and the library that also considers gifts-in-kind as having cash value with the same recognition for donors. Gloria Werner (UCLA) pointed out that professional development organizations count in-kind gifts for value and recognition.

Ernie Ingles (Alberta) asked whether participants kept their own donor files. The responses to his question indicated that some libraries keep their own information and in other institutions, library donors are part of a central system. In all cases, however, the files are very confidential.

There was a discussion of donor letters, how often they are sent, to whom, and how they are pitched. Shirley Baker mentioned that while her university tends to pitch letters to donors by giving level, as a result of Judith Nichols' speech, she wants to rethink that approach.

Brian Schottlaender (California-San Diego) said he had been successful in assessing university needs, checking out CEOs whose interests matched those needs and involving them, making clear what these donors were expected to give and get.

Joe Branin (Ohio State) stressed the importance of internal advocacy at the university to win the cooperation of the other deans as well as the central development office.

Other points that were raised during the session included the following:

Types of boards generally used to involve donors in the fundraising process

- Long-term development board usually involves donors who have an advisory function.
- Short-term development board usually serves in a capital campaign. Members of this board are the big donors who are expected to bring in other big donors.

Trends in naming positions at the university

- Institution sets the dollar values for named positions.
- Some institutions have "wiggle" room about necessary amount for a named position and others don't. At some universities, if a donor gives an amount reasonably close to that required, the position can be named after him.
- Endowments for named positions remain even if the individual holding that position changes.

Value of brochures and other printed literature

- Can be very expensive and sometimes can have a negative impact because donors assume that if the library can afford to print such an expensive piece, it must not need money.
- Pointed out that with digital photos, it is possible to reuse photographs and can do attractive brochures that aren't expensive.
- One participant mentioned that his library only uses donated money for brochures and includes the name of the donor.

The facilitators thanked everyone for a useful discussion that produced a number of thoughtful suggestions.

Summary prepared by Judith Matz
June 11, 2002

[▲ back to top](#)

[May 2002 Table of Contents](#) | [ARL Proceedings](#) | [Publications](#)



[ARL Home](#)

© The Association of Research Libraries
Maintained by: [ARL Web Administrator](#)
Last Updated June 28, 2002