



*The following answers are based on our Experts' experience and represent the opinion of SVP Boulder County. This information should not take the place of advice from appropriate professionals.*

## **Question One—Human Resources**

Dear Experts, I recently took the helm at a small nonprofit with a flat structure. I'm spending too much time managing the whole staff (11 people) when I also do all of the fundraising and usual executive director tasks. I need to find a way to build supervision into two other positions but don't have the resources to hire or give raises. Do you have ideas for alternative organizational structures and incentives?

Thank you, Executive Director at a Boulder County nonprofit

## **Answer—Question One**

Great question as well as an interesting, familiar challenge for non-profits. We have two ideas for you to consider:

### **Idea One:**

This option gives you an opportunity to realign work and create lead/supervisory roles to help both you and your organization accomplish objectives. We would recommend that you first complete this five-step exercise yourself.

### **Step 1: Decide What**

#### For You:

Even before you begin creating lead/supervisor roles first start with looking at the current structure of the work. The purpose of this exercise is to see if there are natural groupings of work, e.g. grouping fundraising with marketing and volunteer outreach and then grouping program management with internal office functions. As a result of this exercise you will see where you can naturally create working supervisor roles to coordinate and guide work of these natural groupings. We imagine they will be working supervisor roles since they will most likely have their own work to do as well. When completing this exercise remember what you are trying to achieve as an Executive Director and ensure that you are structuring and aligning work to help you accomplish your objectives.

#### For Your Team:

Tell your team, "We're going to the whitespace!" This means taking the time to get out of your day-to-day routines (*individually or as a group*) to talk about all the new work that needs to be done to accomplish the strategic goals. Here is where you want to discuss the new structure and the reasons behind it.

List the work on a chart or a whiteboard. The exercise of putting it on the "whitespace" will formally separate and identify the new work from work that is already happening. More importantly, if there are other individuals working with you, great conversations occur when everyone asks clarifying questions and confirms that this is the right work to do. By doing this exercise, you are making the future distinct from the past.

### **Step 2: Decide When**

#### For You and Your Team:

Decide when this work needs to be completed by: in 3 months, this year or 2 years from now? Examine upcoming events, changes, and financial plans for your organization. When creating timelines remember to add in space for contingencies (The 'Oops! We didn't plan on that!' buffer.) and milestones to revisit and re-evaluate set dates.

**Lead/Supervisory Roles Answer** *continued on page 2*



## *Lead/Supervisory Roles Answer continued from page 1*

### **Step 3: Decide Who**

#### For You:

Decide who should do the work. Examine employee capabilities, interests, career goals or work that staff members are already doing to determine if there is any overlap that will make owner assignments better. Here is your opportunity to be honest with your team and let them know that you see leadership potential in them and want to provide them the opportunity to expand their skills. You can also let them know that at the present time and/or foreseeable future there are not opportunities for compensation increases for supervisory duties.

#### For Your Team:

Have your team participate in this exercise. Examine employee interests, career goals or work that staff members are already doing to determine if there is any overlap that will make owner assignments better. Explain how the realignment should ultimately allow you and your organization to focus more effort on fundraising, which in the long-term could potentially allow for compensation increases. They will always have the option to say no.

### **Step 4: Decide How**

#### For You and Your Team:

Decide how the work will get done. Take the new work identified and break it into manageable chunks then allow owners to create timelines and milestones for delivery of their projects.

### **Step 5: Stay Focused and Continually Revisit**

#### For You:

Finally, continually communicate your vision and align your team with this new work. Regularly revisit the progress of the work with your team to make sure they (and you) can accomplish the strategic goals.

*Amy Maranowicz*

### **Idea Two:**

This option leverages the same analysis you would do for Idea One, but instead of one individual taking on a lead/supervisory role within the natural work groupings, the teams manage themselves. Self-managed teams are tricky, but they can work well when performance expectations are clearly outlined and the team members agree to hold each other accountable for work and project completion. Initially, you will have to invest time discussing “rules of engagement” and how the team members will work together, as well as train the team members on how to manage themselves. A good resource for you to consider is, *Succeeding as a Self-Managed Team: A Practical Guide to Operating as a Self-Managed Work Team*, by Richard Chang and Mark Curtin.

This option has several benefits if you implement it well: you won't have to figure out how to find additional compensation dollars for two supervisors, but more importantly, self-managed teams can yield increases in productivity and employee satisfaction. On the down side, self-managed teams that are implemented poorly can result in disillusioned employees and resentment when some perceive that others aren't doing their fair share of the work. If you select this option, we recommend that you do so with a very careful and thorough approach.

*Jodi Grossman*



## **Question Two—Marketing**

Hi, our question is about the intersection of marketing and fundraising. Can you tell us how to integrate the two and what are the best marketing tools to use for fundraising?

Development Director at a local non-profit

## **Answer—Question Two**

Dear Development Director,

In the non-profit sector, marketing is an essential support function for the success of the development effort. Simple and consistent key messaging; communication of the mission's powerful impact through storytelling; and measurable results are essential in both marketing and fundraising. Donors are a key audience in the non-profit world, and the marketer's expertise in messaging, audience segmentation and communication skills bring greater insight to the development function.

A non-profits that strive to gain a broader base of individuals and businesses involved in giving to the mission have to integrate marketing into its thinking. If an organization relies mostly on grant funding, communication and relationship building are still marketing concepts that need to be planned for in the development effort; but a broad marketing plan may not be as necessary. Investment in marketing should be a strategic decision so appropriate resources (staff, money, etc.,) are directed to the effort if an organization chooses to broaden its base of support.

Good marketing can raise the visibility of a non-profit organization: its mission, impact and services. This is what donors want to know. It defines the position of the organization in its market. A good marketing plan should consider messaging to potential donors and support bringing new donors into the organization in a broader way. Marketing people are skilled at communicating the brand promise, which is what engages all audiences into the organization's efforts. All marketing efforts should consider what the impact of the message is on current and potential donors, funders, customers and volunteers then design marketing materials, media relations plan, and so forth with donors in mind.

The website is a key marketing and donor communications tool. The website should communicate impact and brand promise, engage the visitor in the organization and its mission in an interactive way, have well developed search engine optimization, and communicate programs and services while serving as an access point for donations, donor involvement and donor recognition. First people have to know about the organization's website and have a compelling reason to go to it. In addition, well planned and cohesive events can provide both visibility and funds.

While many organizations have the communications/marketing and development functions under one lead person with the intention of better integration, the demands of fundraising often take precedence over marketing -- leaving marketing with little attention. Non-profits feel compelled to raise funds but often neglect the marketing function which, in turn, undermines the fundraising effort. Boards of directors are reluctant to spend money on marketing and often prefer it to be called communications. The fact is, to be successful in development, people need to know about the organization, feel engaged in its mission, understand how the mission can impact me or others I know, or otherwise feel an emotional connection to what the organization does. A good marketing plan supports this desired outcome.

***Intersection of Marketing & Fundraising Answer*** *continued on page 4*



## *Intersection of Marketing & Fundraising Answer continued from page 3*

Stimulating word of mouth advertising (networks) is always the most effective and efficient method in marketing and development. Visits to your organization, storytelling through different points of connection, personal contact with customers who have changed their lives as a result of an organization's services, board of directors' thank you calls to donors, donor appreciation efforts, and good social media are cost effective ways to stimulate broader networks of involvement. Consistent, key messaging creates the impact for these methods to be successful.

*Mary Cobb, Director of Communications at Special Transit (Soon to change its name to.....to be announced with a marketing campaign, brand promise, position statement and key messaging, media and social media plan, events, and more.)*

Dear Fundraiser,

Mary has done an excellent job of explaining the inner connectivity between marketing and fundraising. I would offer these additional comments:

Fundraising is the life blood of any organization. Marketing is how you use the tools at your disposal to expand the base of concerned individuals who are likely to support the efforts of the organization. The two, marketing and fundraising, are complementary.

Knowing your audience for fundraising is key to figuring out how to reach them. Most organizations have different tools available to reach their target audience. This is often referred to as the "Marketing Mix" (all of which impacts fundraising). Examples of this include:

- Web Site
- Printed Materials (Brochure, letterhead, business cards...)
- Public Relations
- Letters from the organization
- Videos
- Public Functions/Personal Contact
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn...)

As Mary said, the message(s) conveyed by all of these methods of reaching the target audience needs to be clear, concise and consistent.

My experience has been that personal involvement in an organization leads to a direct increase in fundraising dollars. I believe marketing efforts should be directed to gaining this involvement. The money will usually follow.

*Jon Hinebauch*