

We had an outstanding MOAA Symposium in June and I want to congratulate our Symposium planning committee chaired by former MOAA Board Member Alfreeda Goff. Our Symposium programming was filled with insight and instruction which shows that as an organization we are advancing toward our association's goals and objectives. We look forward to next year's Symposium in Dallas and encourage all of you to get more involved with MOAA.



Sean T. Frazier



During this time of transition and economic stress, I thought that I would share with you my thoughts on fundraising during a transitional leadership process. In my view, the normal transitional process when a person takes over a key leadership role lasts between zero to six months and six months to one year. During this time, it is extremely important to lay the foundation with key individuals that will impact your organization. Here is the plan:

Phase I: The First "30, 60, 90 Days"

Contact with Key Stakeholders of Influence

This is an extremely important piece of the process. There are going to be a number of individuals that financially hold the fate of your department and it will be very important for you to identify/contact these people quickly as you get to know your new surroundings. There also will be an expectation by these key stakeholders that you seek them out and if you fail to connect with these people in a timely manner, it could negatively impact the way you are able to fundraise for the future.

Communication Maintenance

It will be important to ensure during this transition into your new position that communication about changes, updates and overall project news is distributed to your supporters. If there is not already advisory boards, weekly and monthly prospect meetings, as well as major gift discussion going on within the department, you should be establishing these communication networks.

Campus and Community Interface

There are many types of structures that institution's use in regards to how they manage their development/fundraising efforts. It will be important for you to identify your structure and make sure that there is transparency, communication and cooperation. It will be important that you establish a positive relationship with both your campus fundraising contacts as well as with your state/local government to ensure a shared agenda is happening.

Current and On-Going Needs

The establishment of priorities will be critical as you review departmental resource needs. Capital projects and budgetary issues will take center stage in your determination on what you need to contribute as far as fundraising dollars are concerned. Also, it will be important to make these decisions on departmental needs during this transitional time period.

Phase II: The Team Approach "Creating Touches"

Department Climate and Responsibility Around Fundraising

During this time period it will be extremely important to send a clear and strong message to all staff that fundraising/development efforts are a priority. It will be important for you to clearly connect the dots on why

all staff needs to make it their responsibility to support fundraising efforts and explain how by supporting these efforts all staff/students will benefit.

Senior Staff/Administration, Coach and Student-Athlete Involvement

The culture around fundraising makes it extremely important for personnel at the senior staff, coach and student-athlete level to be engaged with these activities. People who donate to various fundraising projects want to hear from the individuals that will be impacted the most. This group of department staff and students need to embrace fundraising as a needed responsibility and be educated by you if not comfortable with being involved.

Relationship Protocols and Stewardship

It will be important to make sure during this time that you investigate and understand your new institutions rules and guidelines that deal with contacting prospects and general fundraising duties. You might have the good fortune to land in a situation that has well established systems and protocols. If not, you are going to want to review what you have then make necessary adjustments to meet departmental priorities. This review of procedures and prospects is a great time for ensuring that there are checks and balances in place, so that an attention to detail is happening to support the fundraising effort.

Phase III: Exploration of Fundraising Generating Options

Development and Marketing Revenue

As you review what is available to you as far as development and marketing inventory, it will be important to carefully evaluate if these revenue streams are sustainable during a long period of time. Make sure to review and evaluate each corporate, alumni and donor funding source that is dedicated to supporting your operational budget to ensure sustainability.

Network of Best Practices

Depending on your situation and the size of your organization you might want to invest in someone with a professional track record of success to come in and help you and your department put the building blocks together to fundraise. The thing to understand here is that depending on your situation with the group or person that you have hired, you are going to want to make sure that this outside group doesn't do anything to hurt existing productive relationships. Remember, you also are new and getting to know the external and internal nature of your surroundings, so I would recommend using these groups/people to organize, evaluate and to bring national contacts that are not already in your department.

Strategic Plan Development

Lastly, but probably the most important as you transition in, is the development of an athletics department strategic plan. All of the phase's that I have mentioned have merit, but getting buy-in from your staff, president/chancellor, faculty and student-athletes can only happen if you have a unifying process. The best process that I know of to get everyone on the same page, so that there is a shared agenda around resource allocation is to develop a strategic plan. While you are reviewing and evaluating revenues, fundraising and development efforts make it a point to invest time into a strategic planning process. Good Luck!

Sean T. Frazier is the deputy athletics director at Wisconsin and the President of MOAA.