

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS • WEAKNESSES • OPPORTUNITIES • THREATS

Understanding your organization’s resources and capabilities – or lack thereof – is critical for creating a viable future. Is your development effort responding to the opportunities and threats that come your way? Does your development program have sufficient staff, expertise and financial resources to be successful?

We hope you will put together a group of board and staff members to complete this SWOT analysis of your development program. By doing so, you will be able to take better advantage of new opportunities and candidly assess your weaknesses so you can make improvements.

List your INTERNAL STRENGTHS: assets that contribute to the success of your fund development program. In other words, what do you do well? (e.g., thanking donors promptly; good data management; diversified funding sources, etc.)

List your INTERNAL WEAKNESSES: liabilities that limit your fund development program. In other words, where can you improve? (e.g., relying too much on the same people for contributions; dependence upon special events and grants; no major gifts program, etc.)

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List your EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES: those forces over which your fund development program has little or no control that might allow you to raise more money. (e.g., the improving economy; recent flattering articles in the paper about your organization; the trend toward venture philanthropy, etc.)

List your EXTERNAL THREATS: those forces over which your fund development program has little or no control that you need to guard against or prepare for. (e.g., competition from other nonprofits; “snowbirds” living only part of the year here whose loyalty to nonprofits lies elsewhere; cuts in state and local funding, etc.)

Remember - opportunities that are ignored become threats and threats that are dealt with appropriately can be turned into opportunities!

Use the information you garner from this exercise to help you create a strategic fund development plan that is realistic, works toward your organization’s objectives, and has benchmarks to measure success.