



Strategic Staffing for Capital Campaigns

Four Talent Management Imperatives
for the Planning Phase

Advancement Forum

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Executive Summary

Strategic Staffing for Capital Campaigns

Capital campaigns represent a watershed moment as an opportunity to grow and develop advancement staff and operations permanently. During the organized chaos of preparations at the outset of a campaign, staffing-up to meet campaign goals is often at the top of the list of an advancement leader's priorities—yet the lifecycle of a demanding campaign can lead to staff burnout, which causes attrition to spike after campaign conclusion. What's more, university leadership often do not allow those positions to be refilled until the next campaign is announced. To combat burnout and attrition, advancement leaders must plan not only to fill frontline fundraising positions, but to ensure those positions are well supported. To sustain momentum both during and after the campaign's close, advancement leaders must educate leadership on needed staffing using fundraising data and advancement's return on investment.

Our research team reviewed findings from approximately forty conversations with advancement leaders across a range of institutions about staffing and capital campaigns. Through those conversations we isolated three imperatives for advancement leaders during the planning phase.

Three Talent Management Imperatives During the Planning Phase

- 1 Codify Organizational Structures
- 2 Augment Staff to Meet Objectives
- 3 Educate Institutional Leadership

Imperative One: Codify Organizational Structures

Determine Needs and Efficiencies Upfront

Clarify and Define Organizational Structures and Staff Responsibilities

Many advancement leaders view capital campaigns as the perfect opportunity to make much needed structural changes at their institutions. Structural changes in staff reporting and responsibilities employed most often during campaign planning include:

- Realigning advancement and marketing and communications under a single reporting line to streamline communication strategies
- Clarifying or adjusting the direct or indirect reporting lines of gift officers to central administration rather than to deans
- Aligning development and alumni relations operations with campaign needs. Charging alumni relations with discovery and qualification of potential prospects through planned alumni events, moving the annual fund operation from the alumni relations office to the development office or vice versa.



For more information on aligning alumni relations and development download or order copies of [Strategic Alumni Relations Enterprise](#) from EAB.com.

Determine the Need for a Campaign Office Based on Institutional Factors

Some institution leaders believe that all successful campaigns need a separate campaign office to carry out campaign responsibilities. However, advancement leaders caution that the creation of a standalone campaign office may create a responsibility silo, in which campaign responsibilities fall exclusively on the shoulders of campaign office staff.

In reality, it takes a village to plan and execute a successful capital campaign. To avoid this illusion of siloed responsibility, some institutions have added “campaign manager” to the title of a senior advancement leader who oversees either the major gift officer team or advancement services team. Some factors that determine whether advancement leaders should create a separate campaign office include:

- Decentralization of the staff/university
- Maturity of advancement office (i.e., how many capital campaigns the office has completed)
- Existing connectivity of relationship to the president’s office
- Scope of campaign responsibilities

Source: EAB interviews and analysis

Imperative Two: Augment Staff to Meet Objectives

Base Campaign Staffing Numbers on Program Maturity

Chief advancement officers often ask the “magic number” for staffing ahead of a campaign. Of course, no one number exists. However, our research team found an inverse relationship between the number of staff added for capital campaigns and the maturity of advancement divisions. Maturity here refers to the size and sophistication of development staff and the number of campaigns in recent years.

Several Canadian research universities at least doubled their overall staff as they planned for their first campaign in 10 to 20 years. They increased on average from between 40 to 70 staff to between 90 and 150 staff. Frontline gift officers represented the bulk of newly hired staff. One small, private research university in the United States added over 25 staff members after having only maintained an annual giving function prior to their last campaign. In contrast, several mid-sized, private, research universities with very high research activity, and a history of capital campaign success grew advancement staff an average of 30 percent.

Range of Staffing Additions for Capital Campaigns



Source: EAB interviews and analysis

Base Campaign Staffing Numbers on Program Maturity

When staffing up for a campaign, many institutions focus hiring efforts on major gift officers and other frontline fundraisers, such as annual leadership giving officers. Advancement leaders allocate added fundraisers according to potential of pipeline strength. Business and engineering schools receive the lion's share of new campaign hires because these schools tend to lay claim to wealthier prospects. Institutions deprioritize additions to class campaign, corporate and foundation relations, and alumni relations units and add to these areas only sparingly. It's not enough to simply increase frontline fundraising staff. In order to ease burnout, advancement leaders must plan to supplement frontline fundraisers with backend support staff.

Campaigns require greater numbers of advancement services specialists to facilitate and streamline the work of frontline fundraisers and address other campaign needs (e.g., stewardship officers, communications writers, prospect researchers).



Fundraiser to Support Ratio

1:5 to 1:7

Utilize Development Coordinators to their Full Potential

Administrators at some resource-strapped institutions augment their teams before a campaign by adding dynamic development coordinators to help in two ways: frontline fundraising and backend support. Coordinators can help to better leverage major gift officers' time by supporting activities such as newsletter creation and prospect research. On the backend, coordinators assist advancement services by planning events and creating newsletters.

These stretch roles allow development coordinators to grow into major gift officers and help advancement shops avoid the added costs of additional major gift officer salaries.



Hire Added Staff Well in Advance of Campaign Launch

In the highly competitive market for major gift officers, advancement divisions must set hiring processes in motion well before the campaign launch to allay fears of positions left vacant months into a campaign.

For more information on recruiting and hiring staff download [Competing for Talent](#) and [Gifted and Talented](#) by visiting EAB.com.

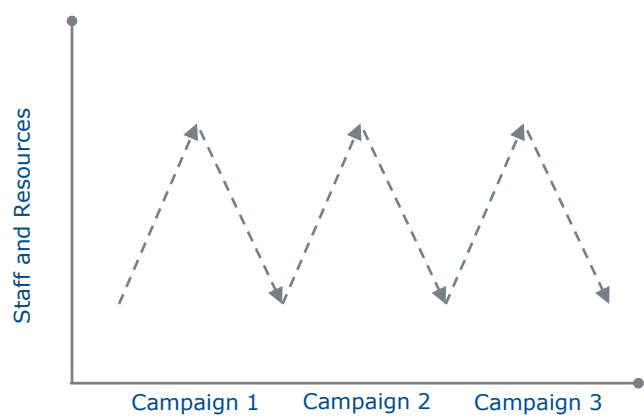
Imperative Three: Educate Institutional Leadership

Justify Staff Increases Through Demonstration of Need

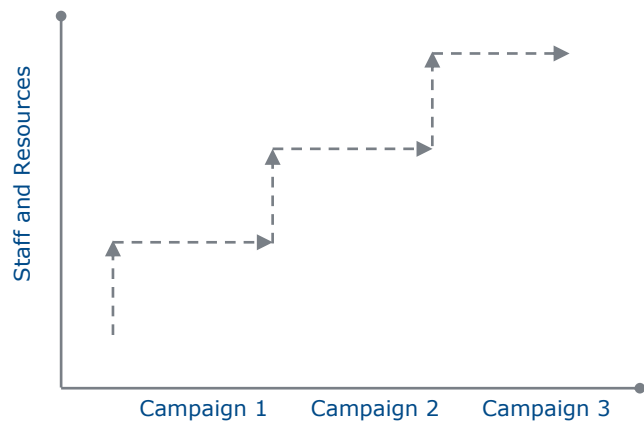
Campaigns offer an opportunity to permanently expand the capacity of an advancement office. One chief advancement officer viewed a campaign as a way to spark an “advancement renaissance.” However, many institutional leaders still think of campaign increases as a temporary means to reach a campaign goal.

Opposing Views on Staffing and Capacity of Advancement Across Multiple Campaigns

Traditional View of Temporary Needs to Meet Campaign Capacity



Ideal State Sustains Momentum of Campaign Capacity Over Time



Two Strategies to Demonstrate Need for Staff Increases

Asking to increase advancement staff might prove a tough sell for some institutional leaders. Institutions rely on two strategies to better advocate for additional staff. The first is to demonstrate the number of major gift officers required to meet with prospects and top prospects. The second strategy is to calculate the return on investment (ROI) of each additional major gift officer.

Two Strategies to Demonstrate Needs for Frontline Staff Increases

Strategy #1: Closing the Prospect Gap



Strategy #2: Calculating ROI for Additional MGOs

Advancement leaders can also use wealth screening and giving data to determine the size the prospect pool across all gift ranges. This can be done by overall or by unit. Once the pool of potential prospects is sized use existing performance metrics for frontline fundraising staff to determine the prospects and donors your current staff can handle. This will also provide clarity on those prospects your team will be unable to penetrate with current staffing levels. Most institutions will find themselves in the predicament of more prospects than gift officers can effectively manage. Existing performance metrics should also be used to set appropriate expectations for the ROI of new MGOs based on their professional experience and the donor pool.

Step One: Size the Pool

	\$1K-\$5K	\$5K-\$10K	\$10K-\$25K	\$25K+
Excellent	182	41	23	11
Very Good	124	13	7	2
Good	44	3	1	0

Step Two: Size Potential Impact



110 avg. portfolio size



12-15 visits per month



\$750k per fiscal year

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Plan for Permanence of Expenditures with Sustainable Funding Sources

To sustain a burgeoning advancement staff after a campaign closes, advancement leaders must practice prudent budget management from the very first stages of the campaign. Rather than unsustainable sources of funding like one-time campaign funding, permanent payroll should fund additional staff salaries to fund these added expenses and retain staff after campaign close. Institutions must maintain larger budgets to yield higher fundraising levels.

To fund added staff salaries, some institutions continue to levy a gift tax.

Sample Campaign Budget

Item	FY1	FY2	FY3	Total
Staff Salaries	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$180,000
Travel Expenses	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$6,000
Cultivation Events	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$6,000
Promotional Materials	\$6,000	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$13,000

Staff salaries and some travel expenses represent items that operational budgets must subsume to continue higher fundraising productivity after campaign close.

Use ROI Calculation to Estimate Impact of Expense Reductions on Fundraising Returns



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$$\left[\frac{(\text{Fundraising Return} - \text{Expenses})}{\text{Expenses}} \right]$$

	×		+		=	
ROI		Proposed Decrease in Expenses		Proposed Decrease in Expenses		Impact on Fundraising Returns

For example, at an institution with fundraising revenues of \$24M and expenses of \$6M the ROI is \$3.00. With the established ROI, you can then calculate the impact of a reduction in expenses on fundraising returns. Continuing the example a reduction of \$500,000 in expenses equates to a possible reduction of \$2.2M in revenue.



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